# *Global* Peace Operations *Review*

# Annual Compilation 2015

*Global*

Peace Operations

*Review*

# EDITORIAL TEAM

## EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Jim Della-Giacoma

## EDITORIAL ADVISORS

Alexandra Novosseloff, John Karlsrud, Yf Reykers

## DATA SPECIALISTS

Alison Burt, Ryan Rappa

## RESEARCH ASSISTANTS

Lesley Connolly, Rahel Kroeker, Olivia Bergen, Tyler Headley, Alex Nyikos

## WEBMASTER & LAYOUT ARTIST

Antonie Evans

## COPY EDITOR

Stephen Laifer

## ILLUSTRATORS

Erin Burt, Sam Minick

## INITIAL PROJECT TEAM

Richard Gowan, Alischa Kugel, Calin Trenkov-Wermut, Nora Gordon

## DISCLAIMER

The Center on International Cooperation is solely responsible for the content of this website. Any errors of fact or analysis, and any and all judgments and interpretations about missions and operations discussed herein, are those of CIC alone.

# COPYRIGHT AND LISCENSES

*Global*

Peace Operations

*Review*

# GLOBAL PEACE OPERATIONS REVIEW

The **Global Peace Operations Review** is an interactive web-portal presenting in-depth analysis and detailed data on military **peacekeeping operations** and civilian-led political missions by the United Nations, regional organizations, and ad-hoc coalitions. The web-portal is a product of the **New York University Center on International Cooperation (CIC)** and a continuation of its long-standing print publications the **Annual Review of Global Peace Operations**  and the **Review of Political Missions**.

Providing the most comprehensive overview of multilateral contributions to **peacekeeping**, **conflict prevention**, and **post-conflict peacebuilding**, the **Review** aims to initiate and inform discussions on the comparative advantages and appropriateness of different missions, and through constructive analysis to further strengthen existing partnerships necessary for them to succeed.

Through the **Country & Regional Profile pages**, the *Review* provides background information and regularly updated key developments on peace operations and the contexts in which they operate. The analysis is further enhanced by the provision of detailed data on each of the UN's peace operations, and headline data on missions fielded by regional organizations and ad hoc missions, which can be accessed in full through the **Data & Trends** section. Data on non-UN peace operations was compiled by the **Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)**. For more details, please see our **Data guide**.  The **Strategic Summary** provides an overview of main developments in mission settings over the past year and presents analysis on trends and the impact these may have on shaping peace operations of the future. Thematic essays presented in the In Focus section unpack issues critical to peace operations, providing analysis and guidance on possible approaches.

The Library section enables readers to download full text .pdf files of past editions of the **Annual Review of Global Peace Operations** (2006-2012) and the **Review of Political Missions** (2010-2012). For those interested in conducting their own analysis using the data generated for these publications, we have provided spreadsheets of all the **statistics** used to compile these reports.

## Scope of the Global Peace Operations Review

The **Review** covers more than one hundred multilateral peace operations active in the previous year including missions fielded by the UN, AU, EU, ECOWAS, OSCE, OAS and coalitions. It uses a **broad definition of peace operations** that includes multilateral and ad hoc military and police missions, as well as civilian led political missions. Neither type of mission has a simple definition. Alongside more straightforward peacekeeping missions, the **Review**, mindful of the need for peace operations to adjust to the changing nature of conflict, also includes peace enforcement operations that employ the use of force and engage in active combat.

Under political missions, we include multilateral civilian-led missions that have political engagement in the form of launching and supporting political processes at their core. This includes, for example, the EU's Special Representatives and the African Union Liaison Offices that support the implementation of peace agreements and accompany political processes. We have excluded missions, such as EU delegations and other liaison offices that may engage in political activities, but as their core function serve more as regular diplomatic or developmental presences. Along the same reasoning, we have also excluded election observer and human rights monitoring missions.

## Disclaimer

The Center on International Cooperation is solely responsible for the content of this publication. Any errors of fact or analysis, and any and all judgments and interpretations about missions and operations discussed herein, are those of CIC alone.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

# EDITOR'S PREFACE

For almost a decade, the *Annual Review of Global Peace Operations (ARGPO)* was the flagship publication of the Center on International Cooperation (CIC). During that time, CIC also released three editions of the *Review of Political Missions*. Together, they set the standard for analyzing UN and non-UN peace operations with enduring thematic essays, thorough country profiles, and detailed mission data.

Peace operations have evolved significantly over this decade and the way we analyzed them also had to change. While well received in the peace operations community in New York, the heavy books were expensive to produce and did not travel well. CIC wanted to get the analysis and data into the hands of a wider range of policymakers, those serving in peace operations in the field, and, most importantly, the citizens of those countries that rely on peace operations for their security.

Looking for a more efficient way to reach wider audiences, the *Global Peace Operations Review (GPOR)* website was conceived. Initially, it was thought the website could be combined with a smaller print edition to act as bridge with the publication's past. We thought CIC's days of publishing "door stoppers" had ended.

Since its launch in late June 2015, GPOR has shown the utility of moving the publication online. In its first six months, 11,631 distinct users came to the site 17,253 times and viewed 28,893 pages of essays, commentary, data, maps, and infographics, which also make up content of this publication. While almost 40 per cent of the sites visitors are in the United States, mostly in New York City, as the map below shows, GPOR now has a verifiably global readership.
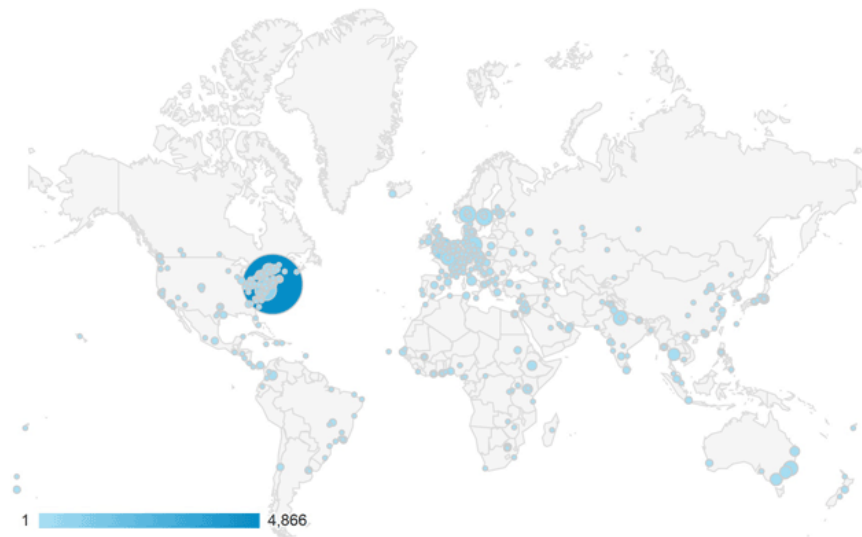


The website analytics tell us we have many readers inside the UN system, including headquarters, regional offices, and peace operations. The direct feedback from readers shows under-secretary-generals to blue helmets in the field access GPOR. Outside the UN, foreign ministries, government offices, international organizations, think tanks, NGOs, and universities are also well represented in the ranks of GPOR's readers.

As regular visitors would have observed, the site is constant state of evolution. We have tried to cover a wide range of topics and also to bring an innovative spirit to the way we present information on the site. Resource constraints meant we had to postpone plans for an accompanying print addition. But feedback from readers, especially those in academic settings, suggested there was a still a demand for a more formal publication. With this support, we were pushed to explore what was possible given the people, funds, and time we had on hand.

This led us to explore new options and leverage the technology that we had available to us. First, we started compiling website posts into **monthly newsletters** in PDF format. At the end of 2015, we started work on compiling all the contributions from the year into one electronic document. We had a productive year and this new publication, known as the *Global Peace Operations Review Annual Compilation 2015*, is not an unsubstantial 262 pages. It is the end product of the efforts of the project team that created GPOR as well as the contributors and editorial team who have managed, curated, and evolved the website since its launch.

The *Annual Compilation* is something of a hybrid product. It looks like a book, has an ISBN, and will soon be available for print on demand. But set in one column, the Annual Compilation is designed for screen reading. While the document is fully searchable and has hyperlinks embedded, it is still not quite a fully-fledged e-book. We're still working on that. In the meantime, we hope it is a useful reference and we look forward to your feedback to help us improve the 2016 edition.

The creation and running of the Global Peace Operations Review has been a team effort. The initial project team consisted of Richard Gowan, Alischa Kugel, Calin Trenkow-Wermut, and Nora Gordon. The website was designed by the **Community Systems Foundation** and is managed by Webmaster Antonie Evans. The editorial team includes advisors John Karlsrud, Alexandra Novosseloff, and Yf Reykers. GPOR has been supported by data specialists Alison Burt and Ryan Rappa, Research Assistants Olivia Bergen, Lesley Connolly, Rahel Kroeker, Alex Nyikos, and Tyler Headley, Copy Editor Stephen Laifer as well as illustrators Erin Burt and Sam Minick.

Its development and ongoing work has been generously supported by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, the German Federal Foreign Office, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Swiss Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

## JIM DELLA-GIACOMA

### EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

### GLOBAL PEACE OPERATIONS REVIEW

### JANUARY 2016

# TRENDS
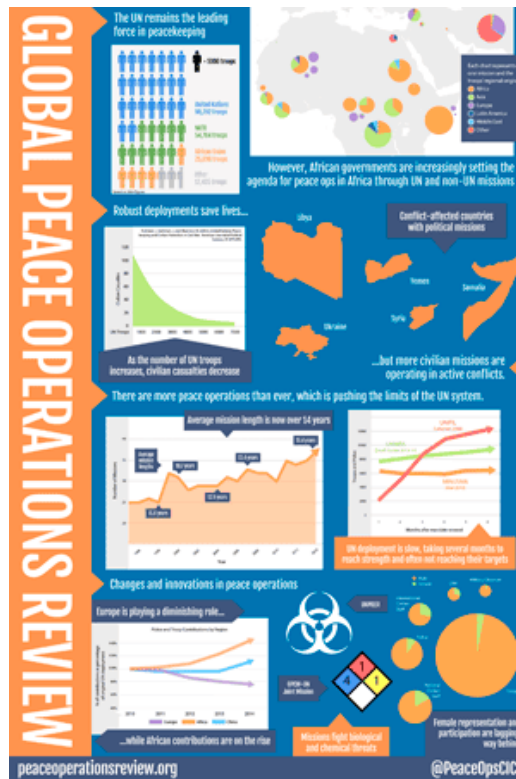
# 10 TRENDS IN PEACE OPERATIONS

by Richard Gowan

## THERE IS INCREASING POLITICAL PRESSURE FOR PEACE OPERATIONS TO USE SIGNIFICANT FORCE TO CREATE STABILITY. THERE IS ALSO EVIDENCE THAT THEY WORK.

The last two years have seen a surge in peace operations. As the **data in this review** shows, UN deployments grew by 8.5% in 2013 and 2014 to involve over 100,000 soldiers and police officers. In the same period, NATO drew down its presence in Afghanistan but the number of personnel deployed by other regional organizations – primarily in Africa – leapt by 60%. There has also been a proliferation of political missions and special envoys dealing with conflicts: the UN and regional organizations appointed over 20 new high-level mediators in the last two years to deal with crises from Burkina Faso to Ukraine.

The first edition of the *Annual Review of Global Peace Operations*, **published in 2006**, opened with a statement that "the start of the twenty-first century has seen the resurgence of peacekeeping as a strategic tool." The UN and its partners had recovered from the disasters of Srebrenica and Rwanda to mount a new generation of operations from Timor-Leste to Liberia. It was possible that this was a temporary phenomenon, but the Annual Review correctly predicted that this would not be the case: "there is every reason to believe that the demand for effective peacekeeping will rise, not shrink, in the years ahead." Similarly, the first edition of the **Review of Political Missions in 2010** argued that civilian crisis management operations "are a diverse tool, and demand for them is likely to increase.

"As the Global Peace Operations Review website goes live for the first time, it seems safe to say that demand for peace operations will remain intense for the foreseeable future. Our **strategic summary** and **global statistics** on **UN** and **non-UN** operations illustrate major patterns in current deployments in more detail. Reviewing these figures, it is possible to identify ten key trends shaping peace operations landscape:

## 1. THE UNITED NATIONS REMAINS THE LEADING FORCE IN PEACE OPERATIONS.

Multiple organizations have contributed to the recent surge in peace operations. The AU and African sub-regional organizations have not only deployed emergency missions in Mali and CAR, but also expanded their political missions.

The EU has also expanded its role in Africa – launching its first military mission on the continent since 2006 in CAR – and the OSCE has leaped into the breach in Ukraine.

Yet the UN has remained the leading mechanism for managing peace operations. Globally, the UN is the largest single deployer of uniformed peacekeepers after **NATO's** drawdown in Afghanistan. It has taken over the African missions in Mali and CAR, as its financial and administrative missions for running long-running missions remain more robust. It is also responsible for three-quarters of civilians deployed in peace operations worldwide.

These deployments do not always give the UN leverage: other actors have displaced it in orchestrating political process in Mali and South Sudan, despite the presence of thousands of blue helmets. But the UN's leading role in peace operations remains resilient.

**FIGURE 1: TOTAL MILITARY DEPLOYMENTS BY SPONSORING INSTITUTION, 2000-2014**
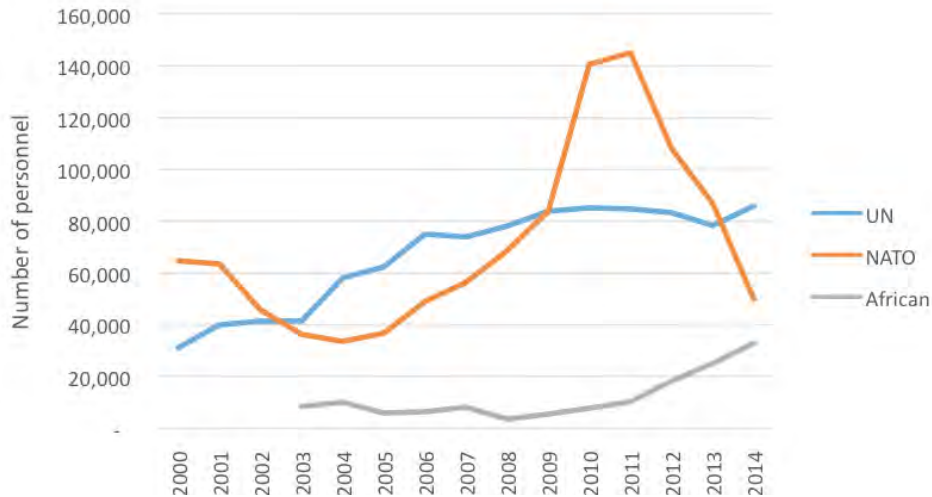


## 2. AFRICAN STATES AND ORGANIZATIONS ARE SETTING THE AGENDA ON THEIR CONTINENT.

Despite the UN's continued institutional leadership, African governments and organizations are increasingly shaping peace operations on their continent, both through the UN and other channels. Their overall numbers of boots on the ground has expanded to 70,000.

The AU has sustained its mission in Somalia, gradually rolling back al-Shabaab in major population centers, and also took the lead in Mali and CAR alongside France while waiting for the UN to deploy. In the DRC, three African nations (South Africa, Tanzania and Malawi) contributed to troops to the innovative Force Intervention Brigade to neutralize militias.

African officials frequently argue that UN missions are too cautious and unwilling to use force. Both inside and outside the UN, African governments are likely to push for more robust and ambitious peace operations in future.

**FIGURE 2: NUMBER OF AFRICAN TROOPS AND POLICE DEPLOYED IN UN AND NON-UN MISSION, 2010-2014**
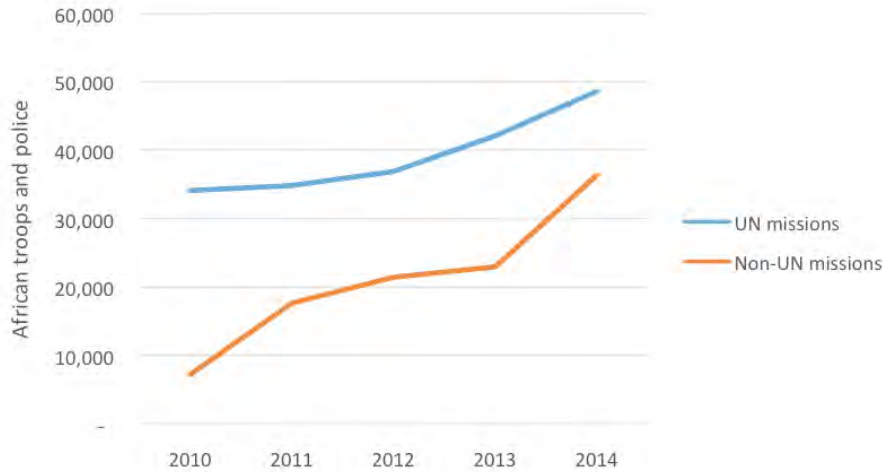


## 3. UN OPERATIONS ARE STILL HANDLING THE AFTERMATH OF THE ARAB REVOLUTIONS.
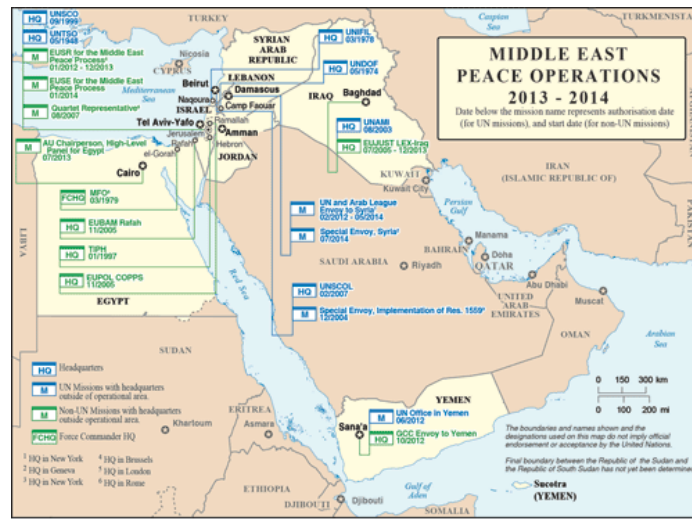


While heavily engaged in Africa, the UN has had central role in the aftermath of the Arab revolutions in the **Middle East** and North Africa (MENA), which have been a huge strategic challenge. Although it has blue helmets in Lebanon, on the Golan and Israel/Palestine, the UN's primary contribution to the recent wave of crises has been political, through field-based political missions (as in **Libya** and **Yemen**) and the work of envoys (as for Syria).

These mediation efforts have often made frustratingly little progress. The Arab League has questioned the UN's continuing role in the region, and proposed forming a stabilization force of its own. In Yemen, Arab states have opted military action over diplomacy.

Nonetheless, the UN's central role in the MENA region has highlighted the importance of its civilian crisis management efforts and the need to strengthen them.

## 4. ROBUST MILITARY DEPLOYMENTS HAVE PROVED EFFECTIVE BUT HARD TO SUSTAIN.

There is increasing political pressure for peace operations to use significant force to create stability. There is also evidence that they work.

In the CAR joint French-African operations probably prevented a genocide in late 2013 and early 2014. The African Union has continued to make advances against Islamist extremists in **Somalia**, creating space for the national authorities and UN to build a sustainable political system. In the Eastern DRC, the FIB succeeded in reversing militia advances in 2014.

These successes parallel recent academic research that shows that the presence of peacekeepers significantly limits fatalities even where violence continues, and can successfully limits violence against civilians (**see Ben Oppenheim's essay**). One recent academic study based on data from past missions concludes that the deployment of a force of around 7,000 peacekeepers can, on average, reduce civilian casualties to near zero:

**FIGURE 3: INCREASING TROOP PRESENCE LEADS TO DECREASING CIVILIAN DEATHS**
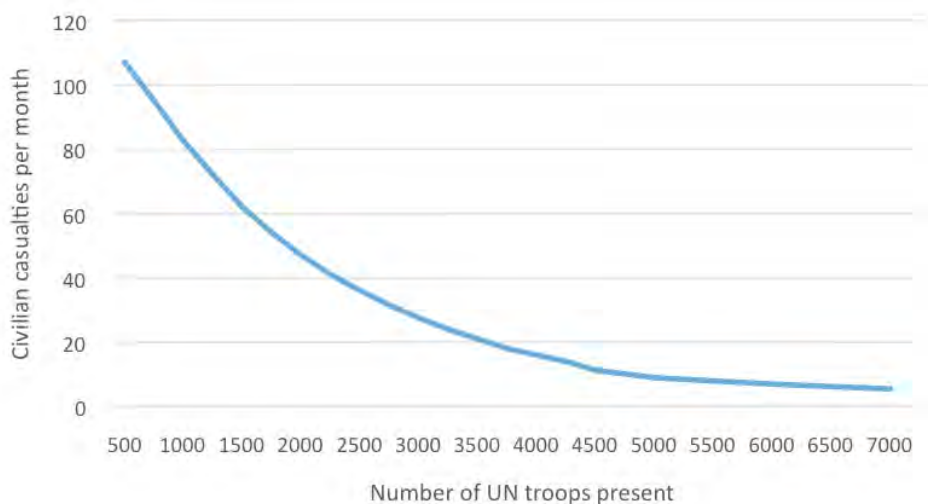


HULTMAN, L., KATHMAN, J. AND SHANNON, M. (2013), UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING AND CIVILIAN PROTECTION IN CIVIL WAR. AMERICAN JOURNAL OF POLITICAL SCIENCE, 57: 875–891.

However, peace operations often struggle to sustain these military successes. An internal UN report in 2014 found that many UN peacekeepers have not fulfilled their obligation to protect civilians in immediate danger. Extremist groups have inflicted frequently casualties on the UN operation in Mali despite France's initial strong intervention. The FIB encountered difficulties in 2015 due to political differences over new campaigns and frictions with the Congolese army. It is clear that both the Security Council and troop contributors need to clarify their vision of the conditions for the effective use of force.

# 5. CIVILIAN POLITICAL MISSIONS ARE OFTEN GIVEN THE HIGHEST-RISK CASES.

Despite the relative effectiveness of robust military mission, it often falls to light-weight civilian political missions to handle particularly dangerous cases. The Security Council has increasingly turned to political missions in recent years to respond to new crises.

**FIGURE 4: NUMBER OF NEW MISSIONS PER YEAR, 1995-2014**
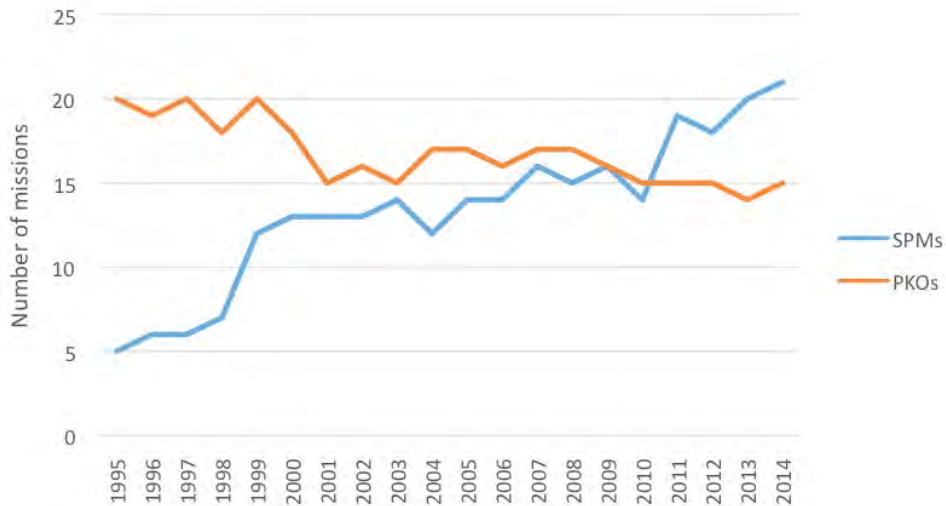


**TABLE 1: POLITICAL MISSIONS IN COUNTRIES EXPERIENCING MAJOR CIVIL WARS, 2009-2010 AND 2013-2014**

*2009-2010*

| Country | Number of SPMs |
| --- | --- |
| Central African Republic | 3 |
| Madagascar | 1 |
| Somalia | 1 |

*2013-2014*

| Country | Number of SPMs |
| --- | --- |
| Central African Republic | 2 |
| Libya | 2 |
| Somalia | 2 |
| Ukraine | 3 |
| Yemen | 1 |

In Ukraine, civilian OSCE personnel have had to monitor a series of fragile ceasefires, and a number of OSCE teams have been kidnapped. In Somalia, Syria and Yemen UN civilian teams have also remained on the frontline of rapidly deteriorating conflicts – although the UN had to pull most of its staff out of Libya.

As the **strategic summary** notes, the Security Council has resorted to sending military guard units to protect civilians in cases including Somalia and CAR. There is a significant risk of "bunkerization": UN personnel unable to fulfill their tasks due to security concerns.

## 6. THE UN IS STRUGGLING TO BALANCE ITS PORTFOLIO OF NEW AND OLD MISSIONS.

The UN has also had to face to the dilemma of launching new missions while sustaining large-scale pre-existing deployments. From 1945 to 1990, the UN launched 18 peace operations: an average of just under one every two years.  Since 1990, it has launched an average of over three every year, (including both peacekeeping operations and special political missions).  In recent years the overall number of UN peacekeeping operations has remained fairly steady –with roughly 15 in the field at any one time – while the overall number of political missions has risen (see Figure 6). But in the last two years the UN has had to launch two large-scale military missions (in Mali and CAR) while sustaining large-scale existing operations, including those in the **Sudans**, the **DRC** and **West Africa**. The average duration of both peacekeeping operations and political missions has notably lengthened in this period.

**FIGURE 5: THE AVERAGE AGE OF MISSION IN YEARS (2005-2015)**
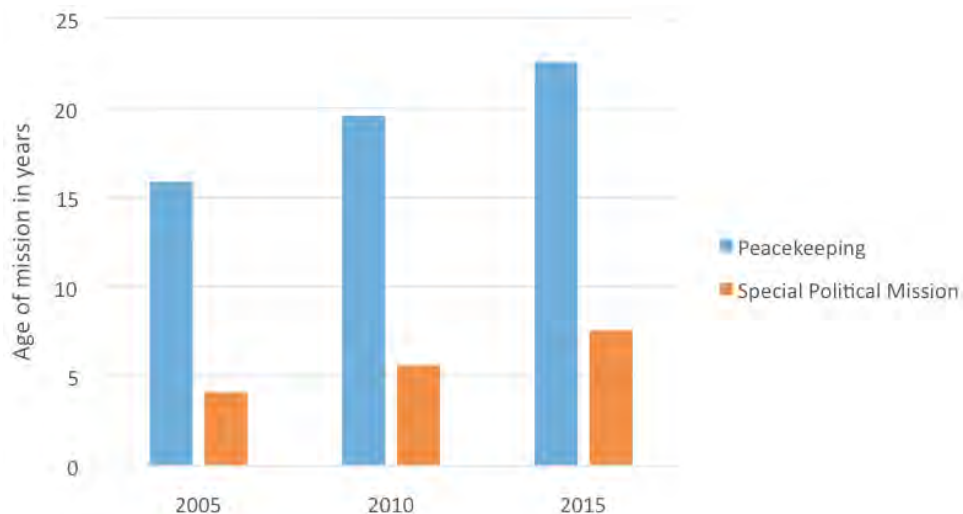


Over half of all troops on UN missions are based in theaters where the organization has had a presence for over ten years. But many of these "legacy" missions are not ready to close.

The persistence of serious violence in cases such as South Sudan and DRC raise questions about the purpose of peacekeeping in these areas. Nonetheless, the Security Council and UN officials will need to search for alternative security mechanisms to large-scale open-ended peace operations – such as over-the-horizon forces able to deploy in a crisis.

# 7. PEACEKEEPERS ARE TAKING TOO LONG TO DEPLOY TO UN OPERATIONS.

With the UN so heavily deployed, there are worrying limits to its ability to respond flexibly and quickly to new crises. These include a mix of political and procedural obstacles to deploying new forces at speed. The UN mission in **Mali**, formally launched in July 2013, took six months to reach even a quarter of its planned strength. The Security Council mandated the UN to add 5,000 troops to the UN Mission in South Sudan in December 2013 – but the mission remained well below this target a full year later, severely limiting its credibility.

The UN has always had problems deploying its largest, infantry-heavy missions, but it can do better. When the Security Council mandated the reinforcement of the UN force in Lebanon in 2006, European nations got the troops on the ground in a matter of months.

**FIGURE 6: TROOP DEPLOYMENT IN FIRST SIX MONTHS AFTER AUTHORIZATION**



The slow processes in Mali and CAR highlight the need for the UN to develop more consistent rapid strategic deployment capabilities, both to launch new missions and reinforce old ones in crisis – or alternatively assist better-placed regional organizations to strengthen their rapid deployment systems as a precursor to blue helmet missions. While the AU was able to play this role in Mali and CAR, many of its units were short on the equipment they needed in the early phase of operations, and the missions were also prey to funding problems. These should not be allowed to hinder future deployments.

# 8. WESTERN POWERS ARE NOT PULLING THEIR MILITARY WEIGHT IN PEACE OPERATIONS.

As NATO has drawn down in Afghanistan, many analysts have hoped that Western countries will do more for UN peacekeeping – or support it indirectly through alternatives such as EU deployments. This support could fill many of the UN's technical gaps.

There have been some positive steps in this direction: The Netherlands and Nordic countries have sent intelligence specialists and other high-end assets to Mali, and the EU has not only sent troops to CAR but also launched a number of civilian mission in the Sahel and East Africa.

Ireland has played an important role in keeping the UN mission on the Golan Heights alive despite a series of kidnappings of peacekeepers by Islamist groups involved in the Syrian war. However, the overall trend in European deployments – both in UN missions and across all organizations -- remains downwards. European nations are sending fewer peacekeepers to the Middle East and still avoid large-scale deployments in sub-Saharan Africa.

The US has recently called on its European allies to reverse this trend, and do more for the UN as part of broader transatlantic security cooperation. But the US still has fewer than 200 soldiers and police under UN command itself.

**FIGURE 7: NUMBER OF EUROPEAN AND AFRICAN TROOPS AND POLICE DEPLOYED IN UN AND NON-UN MISSIONS, 2010-2014**
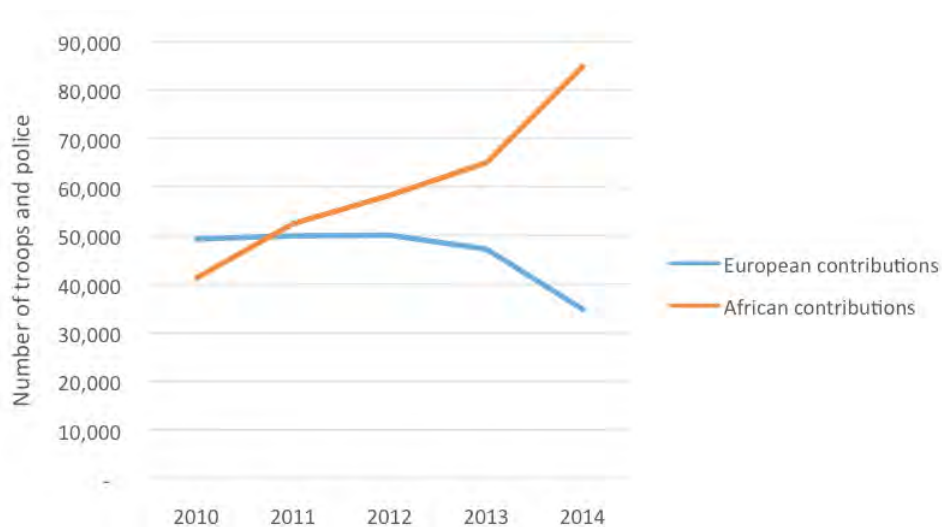


While Western governments consider their peacekeeping options, South Asian countries (**Bangladesh**, India, Nepal and Pakistan) remain leading deployers of blue helmets.

China has deployed its first combat battalion to the UN (in South Sudan), expanding its overall contribution to the UN by 50%, and other regional powers including Indonesia and Vietnam have expressed their desire to increase their deployments. But for now their combined forces remain relatively limited – it will take a concerted strategic push by Asian powers to increase their participation in UN missions to match their rising global weight.

## 9. THE UN IS STILL STRUGGLING TO GET THE RIGHT GENDER BALANCE IN PEACE OPERATIONS.

Despite a strong push for gender equality and mainstreaming by the UN Secretariat, a review of staff composition in UN peace operations reveals a continued gender imbalance. The gender gap is most pronounced for military personnel, where women in 2014 only accounted for three per cent of military staff in peacekeeping operations (see graph below).

Gender representation fared slightly better among police in UN missions, but women still only account for 10 per cent of police personnel. With 21 per cent, the most equal representation is among civilian staff in UN peace operations, although 10 years ago this number almost reached one quarter.

A more equal representation is also an issue among senior leadership in UN peace operations. Out of the 28 field-based peacekeeping and political missions active in 2014, only 7 were headed by women. There are improvements. The past year marked the first appointment of a female force commander to a UN peacekeeping mission (UNFICYP) as well as the occurrence of the first UN peacekeeping operation with a dual female leadership (also **UNFICYP**). With the High-level Review of Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security commencing in October 2015 there is hope that the UN Secretariat and UN member states will recommit to increasing women's participation in peace operations both on the working -and leadership level.

**FIGURE 8: GENDER BREAKDOWN OF TROOPS IN UN PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS**
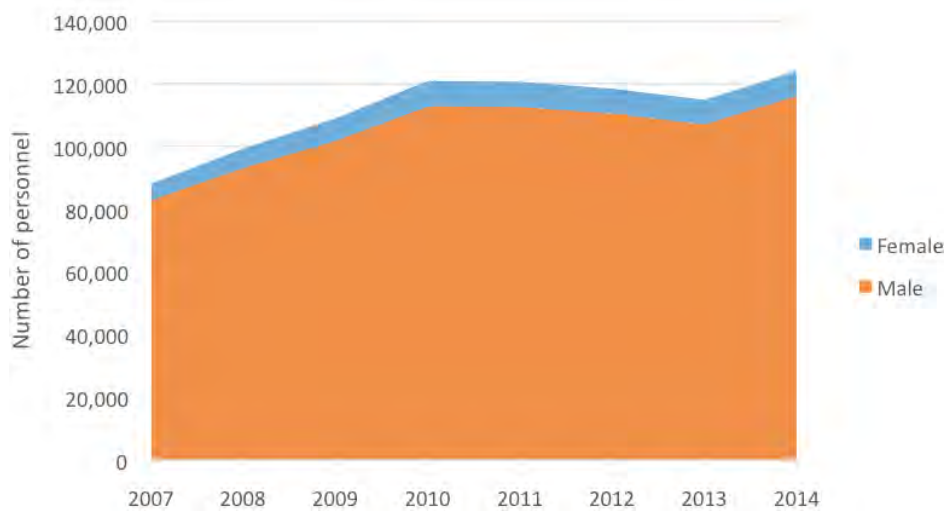
## 10. THERE IS A NEW SPIRIT OF INNOVATION IN PEACE OPERATIONS.

Despite the many obstacles to existing and new peace operations, the UN and its partners have also shown a surprising capacity to innovate. The UN has mounted unique missions such as the UN-OPCW operation in **Syria** in 2013-2014 and the emergency relief mission to fight Ebola in West Africa in 2014. The UN has also made advances in using new technologies in its operations (see **New Tools for Blue Helmets** essay). The OSCE has shown a high degree of flexibility in monitoring the **Ukrainian** conflict. Peace operations are adaptable strategic tools.

There is still a political opening to strengthen peace operations of all types in 2015, and ensure that they can continue to meet the new burdens placed upon them.

Ban Ki-moon's **High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations** lays out a framework for boosting UN peacekeeping operations and political missions, with an emphasis on conflict prevention and making mission more flexible, as well as improving cooperation with partners.

The High-Level Panel's work has stimulated policy-makers in other organizations, including the AU and EU, to review their own thinking on peace operations in light of recent challenges.

In September President Obama will convene a summit on strengthening UN operations in New York, focusing top-level attention on the issue.

These initiatives offer a chance to address some of the main challenges to peace operations – including deployment times, robustness and the vulnerabilities of political missions – head-on. The recent surge in peace operations has demonstrated their continued importance to international security. It is now time to give them the support they deserve.

#### DOWNLOAD THE 10 TRENDS IN PEACE OPERATIONS INFOGRAPHIC

*Richard Gowan is a non-resident fellow at the Center on International Cooperation at NYU, where he was previously research director. He is also a fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations, teaches conflict resolution at Columbia's School of International and Public Affairs, and writes a weekly column ("Diplomatic Fallout") for World Politics Review.* | ***Twitter: @RichardGowan1***

# CHANGING REALITIES: NEW DIMENSIONS OF PEACE OPERATIONS

by Alischa Kugel

**PEACE OPERATIONS INCREASINGLY OPERATE IN HIGHLY VOLATILE ENVIRONMENTS WHERE THERE IS NO PEACE TO KEEP.**

## STRATEGIC SUMMARY

One month before launching the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations to examine the state of UN peacekeeping operations and political missions, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon remarked the time had come to take stock of the lessons we have learned. "The world is changing and our support to peacekeeping, and indeed all peace operations, **must keep pace**."

The nature of conflict is shifting with the inter-state confrontations that led to the creation of the world body giving way to **internationalized civil wars**. Peace operations today are deployed into complex operating theaters, intractable political situations and high-risk environments. This summary details four main trends of this pivotal moment for multilateral peace operations during 2013 and 2014 including:

- Innovation around peace operations;

- Surging African peacekeeping;

- Proliferating peacemaking initiatives by regional organizations, and;

- Increased risk for peacekeepers and civilian staff.

- Trends in Peace Operations

In 2014, 230,797 troops, police and civilian personnel were deployed in global peace operations.3 Both UN and non-UN peacekeeping deployments increased after a period of contraction in 2012. [Not accounting for the ongoing reductions of NATO's ISAF troops in Afghanistan. The total number of troops, police and civilian personnel (in UN missions only) in 2012 excluding ISAF was 152,474 personnel.] UN peacekeeping deployments grew by 8.5 percent, while non-UN forces (excluding the NATO mission in Afghanistan) increased by 60 per cent. This underlined the role regional organizations play in fielding peacekeeping missions as this growth was primarily driven by deployments by African organizations.

**FIGURE 1: OVERALL MILITARY DEPLOYMENTS IN PEACE OPERATIONS, 2000-2014**
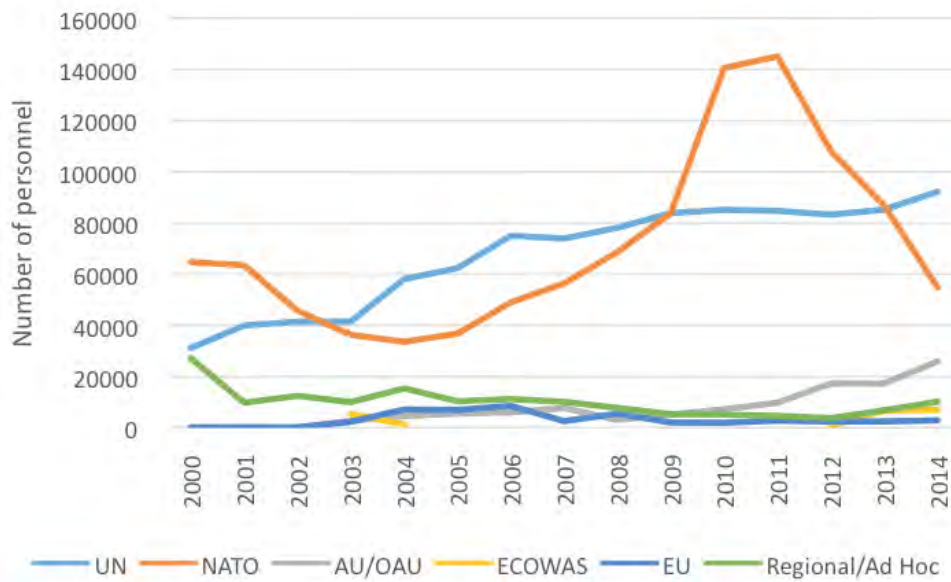


Civilian deployments in field-based military and civilian-led peace operations totaled 29,266 personnel. While UN missions experienced a six percent decrease in civilian deployments since 2012, civilian components in UN missions still comprise 77 per cent of the total civilian deployments in field-based global peace operations.

Events in 2013-14 have shown the wide breadth of international crisis management responses to new challenges. Despite the continued demand for hefty military deployments in cases such as Somalia and Mali, another notable feature of the last two years has been a high level of innovation in response to new challenges:

• The UN launched two highly unusual missions to manage the dismantling of the Syrian chemical stockpile (2013-2014) and the Ebola crisis (2014-2015);

• The African Union has increasingly engaged in civilian as well as military crisis management, launching six new political missions in this period;

• The European Union experimented with its first land-based military mission in Africa for almost a decade (in the Central African Republic) as well as a number of national and regional security sector/training missions across the continent, and;

• The OSCE launched its first monitoring mission in more than a decade in Ukraine.

These initiatives reflect a larger pattern of innovation around peace operations. This includes the Security Council's experiment with the Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) in the Democratic Republic of Congo and efforts by the UN and OSCE to use drones and other technologies in their operations.

The international peace operations system is adapting and evolving to a complex security environment. But the UN and its partners are struggling to find sustainable political and security solutions to many of the challenges they face in cases including Mali, Libya, South Sudan and Syria. It is possible that these challenges will grow further, with demands rising for new international presences in Libya and, possibly, Ukraine.

The period under review was also notable for the surge of African peacekeeping deployments. In Mali (2013) and the Central African Republic (2013-14), African regional actors fielded military bridging missions until larger-scale UN operations were able to deploy. While these African-led operations received additional military support from France and the EU, the deployments point to an increased capacity by African regional actors to field larger peacekeeping deployments. At the same time, the need for such bridging operations highlights the ongoing difficulty the UN has in deploying its missions in a timely manner.

Regional organizations also took on a greater role in fielding political missions, particularly in Africa. Seventeen out of the twenty-four political missions launched by regional organizations in 2013-14 are based on the continent. Beyond large players such as the AU, EU and ECOWAS, it includes less dominant institutions such as ECCAS that lead the mediation effort in CAR. IGAD fielded envoys in Somalia, Sudan and South Sudan. The OIC deployed a mediator for Mali and the Sahel.

The proliferation of mediation efforts also further increased parallel deployments by different institutions in the same country or sub-region. In the two Sudans, ten envoys and mediators from five different institutions are working to support political processes alongside three UN peacekeeping operations (see graph below).[The graph shows missions active as of 31 December 2014.] In Mali and the Sahel region, eight political missions from five different institutions work alongside three military operations. In CAR, three envoys from different institutions work on mediation efforts next to an equal number of military operations. This operational reality requires enhanced coordination between organizations fielding peace operations to avoid duplication and/or counterproductive processes. It also offers opportunities for regional organizations and the UN to discuss how to jointly manage increasing risk levels that their missions face in countries of operation.

**FIGURE 2: PARALLEL PEACE OPERATIONS IN CAR, MALI AND SAHEL, AND SOUTH SUDAN AND SUDAN**
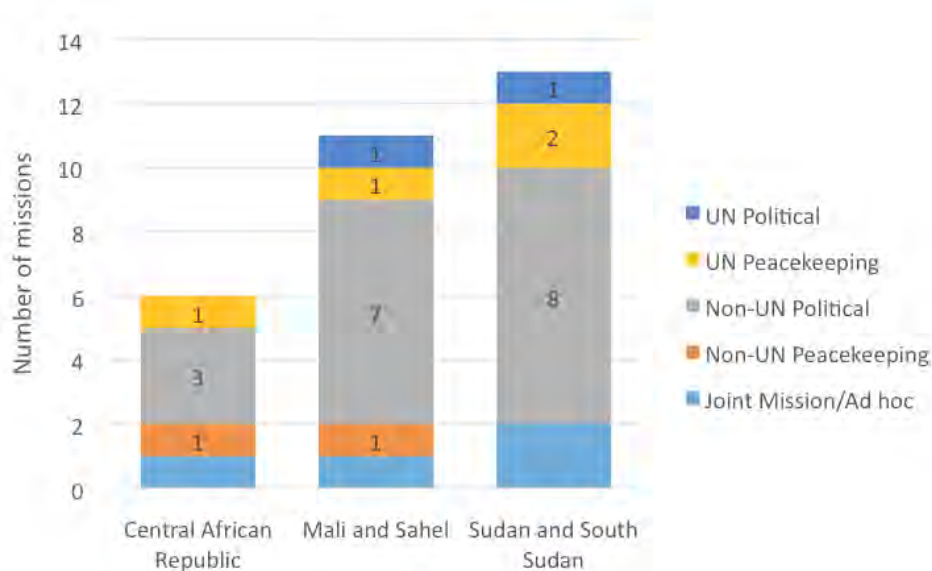
Peace operations increasingly operate in highly volatile environments where there is no peace to keep. In 2014, UN peacekeepers were deployed in four high-intensity conflicts in CAR, DRC, Mali and South Sudan. A once benign operating environment in the Golan Heights has become dangerous after spillover from the Syrian civil war. Terrorist groups frequently target the UN mission in Mali. With 33 fatalities up until April 2015, this has become the second deadliest UN peacekeeping operation on record after Somalia twenty years ago. [Latest available data on fatalities in UN peacekeeping missions is as of 30 April 2015, see **Fatalities**, UN Department for Peacekeeping Operations.]

While the fatality rates in South Sudan and CAR are considerably lower, peacekeepers in these theaters are presented with multiple armed state and non-state actor groups that defy negotiated settlements. In the Golan Heights, military observers were attacked and kidnapped by extremist rebel groups operating in Syria, leading major troop contributors to withdraw their personnel. At UN headquarters discussions ensued about providing troop contributors with a "risk premium," a financial incentive aimed to acknowledge the work of some units under challenging **circumstances**.

Non-UN missions of different types are also increasingly deployed to such environments and often accept a high degree of risk. Regional or ad hoc missions deployed peace operations in eight of the eleven **high-intensity conflicts** in 2014. The African-led missions to Mali and CAR incurred significant casualties (see below), although still far below those of the ongoing **AU mission in Somalia**.

The EU and France fielded missions in high risk areas in Mali and CAR, although these interventions raised concerns in Paris and other European capitals. Through AMISOM as well as the missions in Mali and CAR, the AU demonstrated that it may be politically better positioned to field peace enforcement and counterinsurgency missions. While less risk adverse than the UN or EU, the AU still needs assistance in funding, equipment, training and logistical support to **field its operations**.

**FIGURE 3: FATALITIES BY MALICIOUS ACTS INCURRED IN A ONE-YEAR PERIOD IN AFRICAN-LED AND UN-LED PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS IN MALI AND CAR**
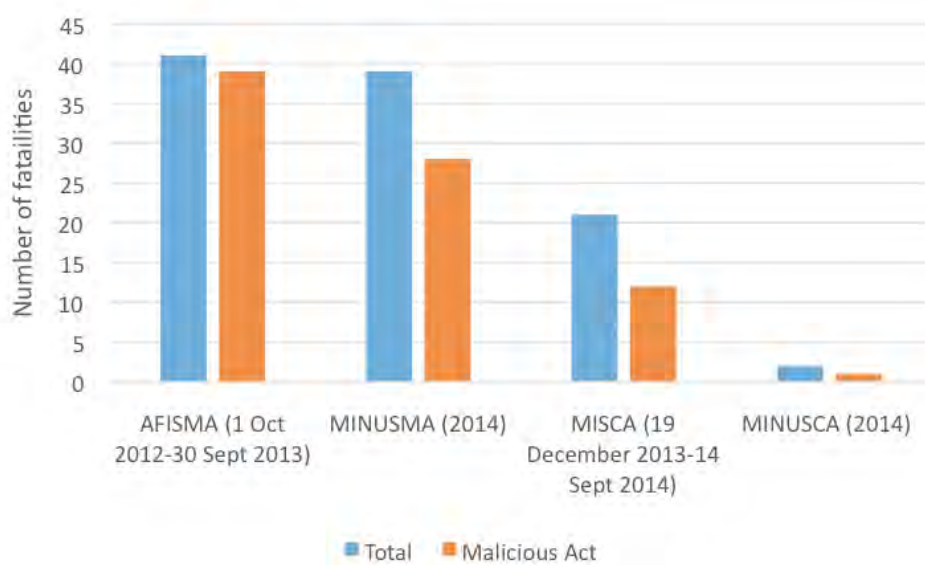
Civilian staff as well as troops face higher levels of risk. A recent UN University study found that almost 90 per cent of UN political missions are operating in **high-intensity conflicts**, increasing the level of risk for non-uniformed personnel. In Somalia on 19 June 2013, only two weeks after the deployment of UNSOM, the UN  compound housing the mission suffered a **devastating attack killing 22 people**. Additional attacks on the compound since then caused further casualties. In Libya, the UN and EU were forced to relocate their missions' staff indefinitely after the deterioration of the security situation. In Ukraine, civilian OSCE monitors were abducted and held for almost 30 days.

The UN has had to innovate to address these challenges. In 2014, it  deployed two guard units of up to 560 troops to CAR and Somalia to protect UN civilian personnel.[The UN Assistance Mission for Iraq has had a guard unit comprised of Fijian and Nepali troops since 2004.] A third deployment to Libya was scrapped due to concerns by the Libyan authorities about the effect the guards' effect on the volatile security situation. Questions about the deployment of guard units and their legal and normative operational bases are shared by the wider UN membership. While some concerns regarding the mandate and responsibilities of guard troops are addressed through Status of Mission agreements between the UN and host governments, broader questions remain on the legal protection of guard troops and their obligations to act in the face of **grave crimes**. Given the proliferation of regional organizations' political missions, these actors will also have to find effective measures to protect their staff in high-risk environments.

# PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS

## UN OPERATIONS

With the launch of three new peacekeeping operations in 2013 and 2014 – the Force Intervention Brigade in the DRC, MINUSMA in Mali and MINUSCA in CAR – military and police deployments to the sixteen UN peacekeeping missions in 2014 stood at 105,173. Expenditure on UN peacekeeping continues to rise. The peacekeeping budget for the fiscal year 1 July 2013-30 June 2014 was $7.83 billion and rose by 8 per cent to $8.47 billion for the 2014-15 period.

Bangladesh, India and Pakistan remain the top three leading troop and police contributing countries. African countries comprised twelve out of the top twenty troop and police contributing nations, with Ethiopia in fourth place. Measured by troop contributions alone, Ethiopia would move ahead of Bangladesh as the leading TCC in 2014. Among European countries, Italy and France took the lead on the 25th and 26th place respectively, followed by Ukraine on the 35th spot.

The role of gender in peace operations has received renewed attention in 2015 as this year marks the 15th anniversary of UN Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. The UN has made efforts to mainstream gender into peacekeeping operations by providing guidance and policy directives, but the data shows there is still work to be done.

In 2014, the organization appointed the first female force commander to its mission in Cyprus (UNFICYP). General Lund's appointment also makes UNFICYP the first UN peacekeeping operation with a dual female leadership. While these are important steps, the staff composition in UN peace operations demonstrates that more has to be done to ensure a more equal gender balance (see graphs below).[The years 2010-2014 include figures on UN special political missions, including military and police personnel from UNAMI and police personnel from UNIOGBIS, UNSMIL, UNAMA and UNSOM.]

Most striking is the gender gap for military personnel. In 2014, women accounted for three per cent of military staff. The figures for police is higher, but still only account for 10 per cent of those in UN peace operations.

**FIGURE 4: GENDER BREAKDOWN OF TROOPS AND POLICE IN UN PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS**

**TROOPS**
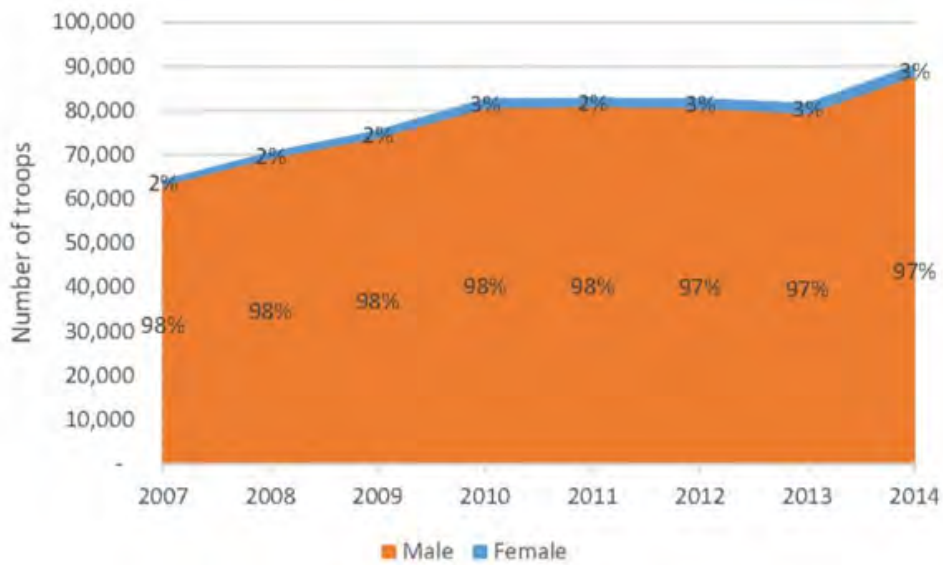


**POLICE**
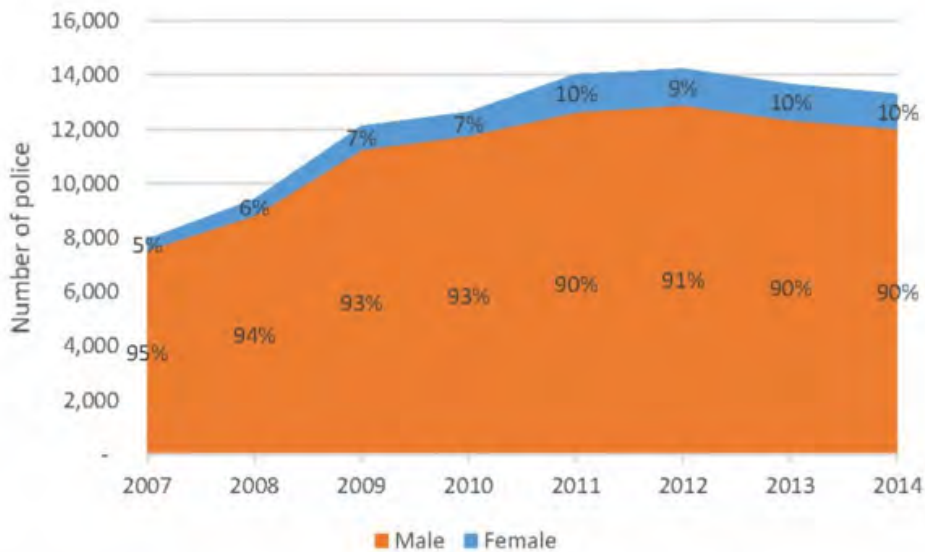
Female representation among civilian staff in UN peace operations is higher at 21 per cent, although down from a decade ago when it was 23 per cent. The upcoming High-level Review of Resolution 1325 in October 2015 will highlight the obstacles to increasing women's participation in peace operations as well as their role in conflict prevention, resolution, protection and peacebuilding.

**FIGURE 5: GENDER BREAKDOWN OF CIVILIAN STAFF IN UN PEACEKEEPING AND POLITICAL MISSIONS**
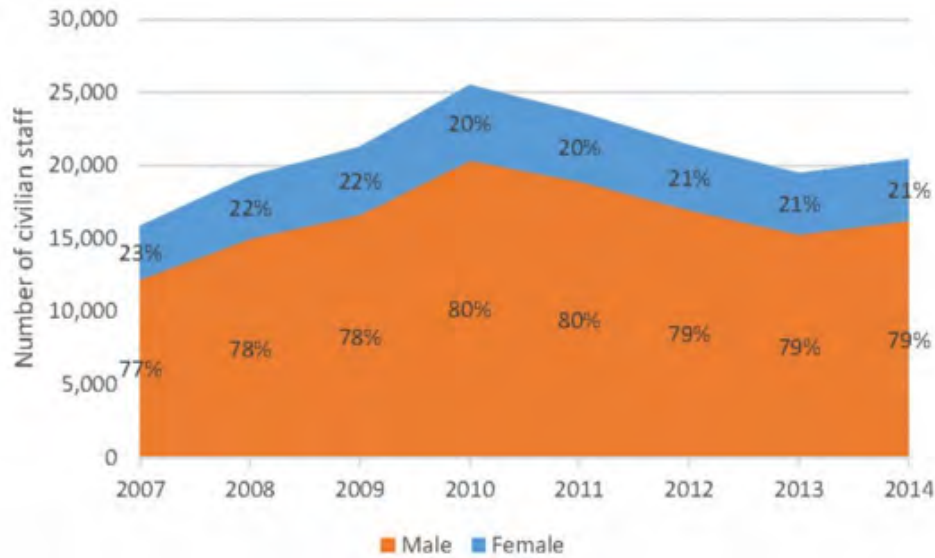


Most missions still struggle to reach full deployment. With an authorized strength of 12,640 and 11,820 respectively, MINUSMA and MINUSCA should be the UN's fourth and fifth largest peacekeeping operations. As of December 2014, they were at 75 and 69 per cent respectively of their authorized strength. The Security Council remains willing to authorize large scale deployments, but member states are not always prepared to supply them with the required personnel and capabilities.

**FIGURE 6: MINUSMA ACTUAL AND AUTHORIZED STRENGTH, JULY 2013 - JULY 2014**



The deployment gap is most pronounced in high risk environments. Responding to the 15 December 2013 political crisis and the rapidly deteriorating humanitarian situation in South Sudan, the Security Council authorized the increase of the overall troop and police strength of UNMISS from the initially authorized 7,000 military and 900 police personnel to 12,500 troops and 1,323 police. Six months later, the mission was only at ¾ of its authorized strength. In 2013, the Council also authorized higher troop levels for the UN Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) from the initially authorized 4,200 to 5,326 military personnel. By the end of 2014, the mission's military component stood at 3,942 or at 74 per cent capacity.

**FIGURE 7: UNMISS ACTUAL AND AUTHORIZED STRENGTH, DECEMBER 2013 - DECEMBER 2014**
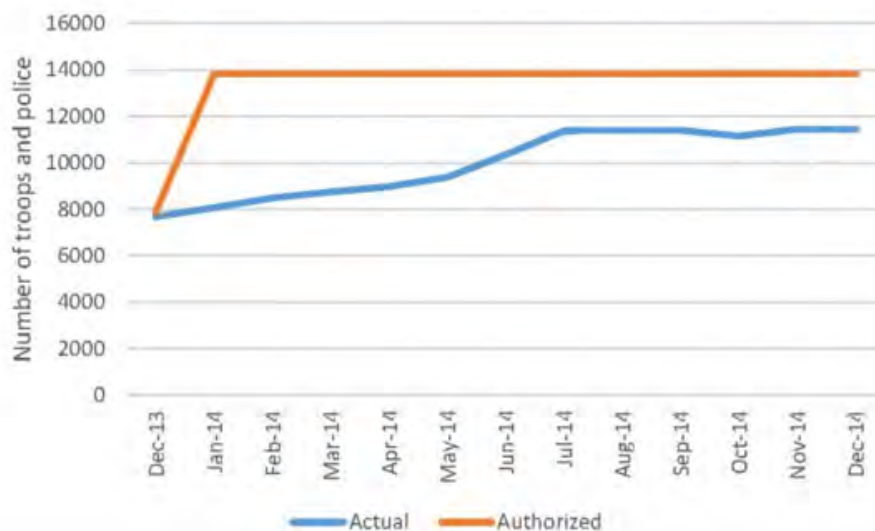
Not all missions are increasing in size. Force reductions in four long-standing UN operations offset the increase of troop levels and deployment of new operations in UNMISS and UNISFA. In the Darfur region of Sudan, UNAMID continued its force reduction with further decreases planned for 2015. These cutbacks, taking place despite a considerable deterioration in the security situation, are happening in response to both pressure by the Sudanese government to withdraw the mission and criticisms of the mission's effectiveness by some UN member states, particularly in protecting civilians.

## THE UN HAS MADE EFFORTS TO MAINSTREAM GENDER INTO PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS BY PROVIDING GUIDANCE AND POLICY DIRECTIVES, BUT THE DATA SHOWS THERE IS STILL WORK TO BE DONE.

In West Africa, UNOCI began its troop drawdown in 2014 with the aim of reducing its military component from 7,137 to 5,437 by 30 June 2015. In neighboring Liberia, UNMIL in February 2014, began the second phase of a three-phase troop drawdown, which was completed in June. Due to the Ebola outbreak, the Security Council in December 2014 decided to halt the last phase of the drawdown and keep the force strength at 4,811 military and 1,795 police personnel with a possible resumption of the drawdown process in 2015.

Following the consolidation plan of March 2013 for the UN mission in Haiti that foresees the complete drawdown of MINUSTAH in 2016, the mission continued to lower its force strength with the aim of reducing its presence to 2,370 troops by June 2015, depending on the situation on the ground. The mission's police component remained close to its authorized level of 2,601, reflecting the mission's efforts to strengthen the national police force ahead of the 2015 elections.

## REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Non-UN peacekeeping deployments increased significantly during the period under review. Most notable were the ECOWAS and AU-led short-term bridging operations in Mali and CAR. Both actors also maintained longer-term operations in Guinea-Bissau and Somalia respectively. ECOWAS provided the bulk of troops of the African-led International Support Mission to Mali (AFISMA) and saw its military deployments increase fivefold in 2013.[Based on troop and police contributions from ECOWAS member states to ECOMIB and AFISMA.]

The AU operated its second larger-scale peacekeeping operation with the deployment of the African-led International Support Mission to the Central African Republic (MISCA), which had just over 6,000 military, police and civilian personnel. The organization's principal peacekeeping mission, the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), neared full deployment by the end of 2014, following an increase of its authorized troop strength from 17,731 to 22,126 military personnel. Uganda, Burundi and Ethiopia were the largest troop and police contributors in missions fielded by the AU and ECOWAS.

The EU in 2014, deployed its first military mission in six years in the Central African Republic.[The mission, EUFOR RCA, came to an end in March 2015.] Though authorized with unusual speed in February, the EU experienced difficulties in generating the close to 800 troops and the equipment to launch the operation. This was in large part due to member state concerns about the risk of

deploying troops in a volatile environment. The EU's two other field missions authorized in 2013 and 2014 respectively are training missions in Mali.[EUTM Mali is a military training mission, while EUCAP SAHEL Mali is a civilian CSDP mission.]

France overshadowed the EU's effort. Paris fielded two military operations in Mali and the Central African Republic in 2013. In January, France launched Operation Serval, a 1,600 strong counter-terrorism mission alongside Malian forces that engaged in offensive operations against rebel and Islamist groups in Mali's north. It was also mandated to intervene in support of MINUSMA when under imminent threat. In August 2014, Operation Barkhane, a 3,000 strong anti-terrorist operation with a larger regional scope, replaced Serval. The new operation still carries out support functions for MINUSMA. In December, France deployed 2,000 troops to the Central African Republic as part of Operation Sangaris to support MISCA and later MINUSCA in the discharge of its mandate.

# POLITICAL MISSIONS

## UN POLITICAL MISSIONS

In Africa, where the UN fielded about half of its field-based political missions and special representatives, the organization closed four long-standing field missions in Somalia, Sierra Leone, the Central African Republic and Burundi in the course of 2013 and 2014. In June 2013, the UN Political Office in Somalia completed its mandate after accompanying the country's political transition for almost two decades. Its replacement, the UN Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), provides support to the newly formed Somali government. In Sierra Leone, following the country's successful elections, UNIPSIL in March 2014 ended its operation and handed over responsibility to the UN Country Team. The mission's closure concluded more than fifteen years of UN peace operation support to the country.

In the Central African Republic, following the December 2012 outbreak of violence that required the redeployment of peacekeeping forces, BINUCA was subsumed in MINUSCA in April 2014. In December 2014, after repeated requests by the government, the UN Office in Burundi transferred responsibilities over to the UN Country Team, amid political tensions ahead of the legislative and presidential elections scheduled for May and August 2015.

In addition to the new mission in Somalia, the UN also established the position of the Special Envoy to the Great Lakes Region to support the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework, aimed to stabilize the DRC and the region.

In the Middle East, where the UN remains an important institutional player, Staffan de Mistura was appointed as the new Special Envoy for Syria after the resignation of Lakhdar Brahimi as Joint UN-Arab League Envoy for Syria in May 2014. The position is no longer institutionally shared, largely because of tensions between the Syrian regime and the Arab League as well as deep divisions among its membership on the approach to the crisis. This leaves the AU-UN Chief mediator for Darfur the sole institutionally combined political mission.

The approved budget for field-based UN political missions and envoys for the period covering 1 January 2013 to 31 December 2013 was $565 million. The budget increased by 4 per cent to $590 million in 2014. The 2014 budget reflects larger decreases in several missions due to drawdown of operations as well as staffing reductions in the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan's (UNAMA) as part of operational rationalization efforts. These budget savings were offset by a 60 per cent increase in the budget

of the UN Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), primarily driven by the enlargement of the mission's security section by 80 new positions, as well as the inclusion of UNSOM's budget, which with over $50 million is the fourth highest grossing political mission.

## REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

A host of regional organizations established new political missions over the last two years, with eight regional organizations deploying twenty new envoys to mediate various conflicts.[These are envoys and mediators fielded by the AU, EU, OSCE, IGAD, ECOWAS, OIF, OIC and LAS as detailed below.]

For the first time in over ten years, the OSCE in March 2014 launched a field-based civilian observer mission in Ukraine. With an initial strength of 100 observers, the Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine has since then become the largest OSCE field operation with an authorized strength of 1,000 monitors  and more than **700 support staff**. The organization also launched three other new civilian missions in 2014, focused on addressing the conflict in Ukraine, including two representatives of the OSCE Chairman in Office and one Personal Envoy, all of whom deal with the conflict's political dialogue aspect.

 The EU and AU both launched six new missions, including three missions that deployed alongside each other in the Mali/Sahel region and three in Libya.[These are for the Sahel/Mali: AU Mission for Mali and the Sahel (MISAHEL), the EU Special Representative for the Sahel and the EU CSDP Mission in Mali (EUCAP Sahel Mali).For Libya: the AU Special Envoy for Libya, the EU Border Assistance Mission in Libya (EUBAM Libya) and the Special Envoy to the EU HR/VP for Libya.] In addition to the new EUSR post in the Sahel and two new Special Envoy positions in Libya and Central Asia, the EU also deployed three smaller scale field missions in Libya, Mali and Ukraine.  These focus on border monitoring, capacity building of internal security forces and civilian security sector reform, respectively.[The EUSR posts for the Middle East Peace Process and Central Asia were abolished in January and April 2014, and each replaced with Special Envoy positions.]

The EU Envoy to Libya, Bernardino Léon, was appointed to head the UN Mission in Libya in August 2014, and the Libya Envoy position was not filled again. The AU established a civilian field presence, the AU Mission for Mali and the Sahel (MISAHEL) in August 2013, and further appointed three Special Envoys for Burkina Faso, Libya, Western Sahara and Tunisia. It also established a High-Level Panel for Egypt mandated to work with Egyptian stakeholders on a political dialogue aimed at national reconciliation.

IGAD established four civilian presences all focused on South Sudan: the Office of the three IGAD Special Envoys for South Sudan and the Monitoring and Verification Mechanism that monitors compliance with the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement between the government of South Sudan and SPLM/A.

ECOWAS appointed a Special Representative to Burkina Faso following the November 2014 political crisis in the country, as well as a Special Representative to Liberia who will provide support to the government's peace and stability consolidation efforts. The International Organisation of La Francophonie, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the League of Arab States established Special Envoy positions in CAR, Mali/Sahel and Libya, respectively.

*Alischa Kugel is a Center on International Cooperation at NYU consultant and as a former Senior Program Officer at CIC was a contributor to and editor of this research.  | Twitter: @AlischaKugel*

©UN PHOTO

# THE ENDURING LEGITIMACY OF UN PEACE OPERATIONS

by Jim Della-Giacoma

**THE PATTERN OF SPECIAL POLITICAL MISSIONS HAS BEEN CLEAR: WHERE THERE'S WAR, THERE WILL BE PEACEMAKERS—EVEN IF THOSE ARE BATTLEGROUNDS WHERE ARMED PEACEKEEPERS FEAR TO TREAD.**

A decade ago, there were some critics ready to predict a downturn in international peace operations. The start of the 21st century had seen a return of peacekeeping from East Timor to Liberia, but critics saw this as a temporary phenomenon. The first *Annual Review of Global Peace Operations* published in 2006 wasn't the product of one of the skeptics. 'There is every reason to believe that the demand for effective peacekeeping will rise, not shrink, in the years ahead,' it predicted. It shouldn't be a surprise, then, that the latest findings show peace operations continue to surge even as NATO and its allies—including Australia—withdraw from Afghanistan. In a world of intractable conflicts and limited good options, peacekeeping is still a valuable strategic tool.

The report of the UN Secretary-General's High Level Panel on peace operations—*Uniting Our Strengths for Peace*, released on 17 June argues for the primacy of politics, more responsive operations, stronger partnerships, and missions that are field-focused and people-centered. While not as revolutionary as August 2000 *Brahimi Report*, this 'insiders' document' does propose some new ideas for old problems as well as contain a long list of technocratic fixes.

As the *Annual Review* migrates online to become the Global Peace Operations Review, the latest data shows that UN deployments have grown by 8% in 2013 and 2014 to involve more than 100,000 soldiers and police. The number of personnel deployed by other regional organisations, especially in Africa, leapt by 60%.

The new website data on global peace operations isn't just limited to uniformed personnel. In the same period, the UN and regional groupings have appointed more than 20 new envoys to head special political missions mediating crises from Burkina Faso to Ukraine.

The first edition of the *Review of Political Missions in 2010* was recognition of the value of 'blue suits' in resolving conflicts, which are always political problems before they turn violent. Civilian crisis management operations, it said, 'are a diverse tool, and demand for them is likely to increase'.

The reviews published over the last decade weren't crystal-ball gazing. They gathered data from the statistics visible in the rear view mirror of history. They didn't foresee the turmoil resulting from end of the Gaddafi regime, state fragility in West Africa, or civil wars in Syria and Yemen.

## THERE'S STILL A DEPLOYMENT GAP. UN MISSIONS MOSTLY STRUGGLE TO REACH MANDATED STRENGTH.

But looking backwards, the pattern of special political missions has been clear: where there's war, there will be peacemakers—even if those are battlegrounds where armed peacekeepers fear to tread. By this metric, more peacemakers demonstrate that conflict is on the rise and are more numerous now than those of 2005. **NATO's drawdown has also restored the UN as the leader in peace operations**. Compared to most regional groupings, the UN is more capable of mobilising and managing the deployment of multinational forces.

A decade on from when Australian troops packed up from the Timor–Indonesia border, peacekeeping has also evolved. In Liberia, **peacekeepers were recently deployed to help combat Ebola**. There are new doctrines; such as one covering the protection of civilians, and old debates; such as the limits of the use of force, especially surrounding the Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) in the DRC.

Such innovations court controversy. To many, the new tasks look like mission creep. In DRC, unarmed drones have been deployed to conduct surveillance, **raising issues of invasion of privacy**. In the Mali mission, Netherlands signalers have eavesdropped on the phone calls of armed groups, **special forces have conducted long range patrols**, and Apache attack helicopters have prowled the skies. Interventions like this come close to a red line for some member states. The last thing they want is to empower overly aggressive UN missions or ones that might spy on them.

Robust UN missions are seen as effective but are hard to sustain. Key troop contributors, especially the South Asian countries that form the backbone of UN peace operations, are reluctant to sign up for such duties.

New Asian contributors are increasingly filling the blue helmets' ranks, but they share similar reservations. **China started slowly**, but has now deployed its first combat battalion in South Sudan. **Indonesia has pledged to become a top-ten contributing country** by more than doubling its current contribution to 4,000 personnel by 2019, but worries the FIB might be 'seen as a party to the conflict and perceived partial'. It is a delicate line to walk and probably can only really be avoided by UN peacekeeping operations avoiding robust mandates. Panel chairman Jose Ramos Horta said that enforcement tasks, like those given to the UN in Somalia in 1993 and in DRC in 2003, must be 'exceptional' and 'implemented with extreme caution'.

But despite such additions, there's still a deployment gap. UN missions mostly struggle to reach mandated strength. Where this isn't so much a problem, such as in UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), it's because there's a diversity of contributors, especially from Europe, but also from peacekeeping aspirants like Indonesia.

Some small European countries, such as Ireland, are **proud of their tradition of UN peacekeeping**. In 1997, two-thirds of Irish soldiers had served on UN peacekeeping operations—70% of these more than once. But US ambassador to the UN Samantha Power has **argued that all European nations must do more**. It's a message that should be heard in Australia too.

UN deployments aren't a distraction from NATO's core mandate, Power says. On the contrary, they add to collective security. Perhaps, inadvertently, she also explained why they endure and the UN Security Council turns to them when 'something must be done'.

'Blue helmets carry the unique legitimacy of having 193 Member States behind them – from the global North and South alike,' she said. This mattered when Australian forces went to Timor in 1999: it meant InterFET wasn't an invasion and UNTAET not an occupation. They were missions to enforce and support peace of behalf of all nations. In some fights, it pays to have the world on your side.

This article was originally published by the **Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI)** on June 24 2015

*Jim Della-Giacoma is the Deputy Director of the Center on International Cooperation at NYU. | **Twitter: @jimdella***

# THE HIPPO REPORT

UN PHOTO/ESKINDER DEBEBE. SECRETARY-GENERAL BAN KI-MOON (RIGHT) RECEIVES THE REPORT OF THE HIGH-LEVEL INDEPENDENT PANEL FOR THE REVIEW OF PEACE OPERATIONS, FROM THE PANEL'S CHAIR JOSÉ RAMOS-HORTA, NOBEL LAUREATE AND FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF TIMOR-LESTE, 16 JUNE 2015.

# THE UN PANEL ON PEACE OPERATIONS: GETTING THE POLITICS RIGHT?

by Jim Della-Giacoma

**CONFLICT PREVENTION AND MEDIATION NEED TO BE REMADE A PRIORITY; THE PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS MUST BE REGARDED AS A CORE OBLIGATION OF THE UN.**

All peace operations are political. Ian Martin wrote an **essay** with that title in CIC's first Review of Political Missions in 2010. It is unsurprising, then, that the report of the High-Level Panel on Peace Operations of which he has been a prominent member has the same starting point. When the United Nations intervenes, it is not using diplomacy and the threat of armed force in a vacuum: the goal is to stop violence caused by a struggle over power. The use of internationally mandated armed force, if at all necessary, is only one means and not the sole end of any UN peace operation.

But what are the politics of this latest attempt to reform the way the world body addresses conflict? How should we understand this detailed effort to analyze the challenges of making peace or keeping it? What change are the words on paper trying to effect on the ground or at UN headquarters? And what are its chances of success?

A brief survey of the world should make it clear these are urgent questions that need clear answers. The mission of the United Nations captured in the first line of its **charter**, reproduced on the front cover of the Panel's report, remains as relevant today as it was when founded in 1945: the purpose of the UN is to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. This is as much a challenge for the organization in 2015 almost 70 years after its creation.

As the UN celebrates its birth on 26 June, it has more than 128,000 uniformed and civilian personnel in 39 missions. Peace operations flying under the blue flag or those of other groupings are undergoing a surge. Africa is the numerical center of gravity for peace operations, but they are also spread across the Americas, Asia, Europe, and the Middle East. Displacement, mostly caused by conflict, is at an all time high. Since the year of the landmark **Brahimi Report** released in August 2000, the numbers of those forced to flee their homes has more than doubled from 20 million to 51 million at the end of 2014.

At the center of this massive movement of people is the intractable Syrian civil war, directly impacting the region and infecting the globe. It acts as a beacon alerting the people of the world to the impotence of "their" organization. This report in its substance and between its lines is firstly a story about the limits of the United Nations. It is a humble effort in a complex strategic environment.

"UN peace operations can and do make important, and at times decisive, contributions to conflict prevention and resolution, but they cannot and should not be asked to respond to all threats." [Paragraph 17]

*Uniting Our Strengths for Peace – Politics, Partnership And People* is the formal name of the report of the High-Level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations set up by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in October 2014. It defines these strengths broadly as activities that span from peacekeeping to special political missions, good offices and mediation initiatives. It makes the case for what it calls four essential shifts. First, it calls on the UN system to recognize that *politics* must drive peace operations. Second, it argues that the full spectrum of peace operations should be used more flexibly. Third, it makes the case for *partnerships* to be a greater part of the future. Fourth, it urges those in the Secretariat charged with implementing them to become more field-focused and *people-centered.*

The report argues that change is required across four of the most important areas of UN peace operations: conflict prevention and mediation need to be remade a priority; the protection of civilians must be regarded as a core obligation of the UN; the use of force by UN peace operations and others must be clarified; and greater attention must also be given to sustain peace after an agreement has been signed or an election held.

But more than "a call for change," this report is a reminder of how many problems remain the same since the last big review. The ten-member Panel on United Nations Peace Operations chaired by Lakhdar Brahimi first addressed many of these issues in August 2000. It proved to be something of a blueprint for the former Algerian foreign minister. He had the opportunity to put his ideas into practice, especially the concept of the "light footprint" mission, as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) in Afghanistan. Re-reading the *Brahimi report's* executive summary should be a pre-requisite before tackling the 321 numbered paragraphs of *Uniting for Peace*. The external and internal challenges for UN peace operations are uncannily similar.

While not as revolutionary as *Brahimi* was in its time, this report does propose some new ideas for old problems. To be ready to act, a UN standing capacity was first proposed in 1948, but Member States have never embraced this idea. For decades, it has been lamented that peacekeepers take too long to deploy to UN operations. *Brahimi* proposed targets for rapid deployment of 30 days

for a "traditional mission" and 90 days for a "complex one". This has proved too demanding a standard for the system to meet. *Uniting for Peace* now advances the idea of a "small UN vanguard capability" to allow quick response to a new mission or provide reinforcements to an existing operation. These units could be deployed from a regional hub and equipped to be self-sustaining for three months. The cost of maintaining this strategic reserve could be shared by a group of missions, but once deployed their costs would be charged to the mission budget where they were sent. The Panel urges the Secretariat to come up with the plans to make this standby option a reality.

The Panel resurrects recommendations from buried reports that it believes still make sense. Drawing from the December 2008 **Prodi report** on AU-UN peace operations, it proposes more concrete partnerships with regional organisations should become a more important part of UN peace operations. It refloats the idea that assessed contributions usually used for UN peacekeeping could be applied to missions led by regional organisations such as the African Union.  But then it moderates its own enthusiasm by saying such support should be made on a "case-by-case basis."

There is a real need to provide more support to African peace operations. A UN force can take time to be mandated and deployed. Regional countries can react more quickly to crises, but they face challenges providing long-term support to their forces dispatched to deal with conflict in their own neighborhood. **Data from the *Global Peace Operations Review*** illustrates the scale of the problem and its possible cost if this idea is taken up. In 2014, more than 48,000 African troops served with UN missions on their own continent. Meanwhile, in excess of 36,000 troops were sent to take part in non-UN missions.

## THE USE OF INTERNATIONALLY MANDATED ARMED FORCE, IF AT ALL NECESSARY, IS ONLY ONE MEANS AND NOT THE SOLE END OF ANY UN PEACE OPERATION.

Such arrangements in financing missions could lead to conceptual shifts. In many deployments, including in the **UN mission in DRC** and **AU-led operation in Somalia**, African contingents have been much better prepared to use force in robust operations than their South Asian comrades who are the biggest UN troop contributors. But shifting the burden onto AU troops by sharing the cost of deployments does not equal UN disengagement. Monitoring interventions derived and funded under such mandates will still be a challenge for the UN system, which puts a premium on the protecting of civilians, human rights, and preventing sexual abuse and violence.

*Uniting for Peace* tries to draw a red line over the UN's involvement in counter-terrorism operations: UN peacekeeping missions are not suited for such operations. They lack the equipment, intelligence, logistics, and training required. This is all true. But such a demarcation may be in vain. Whether they plan for it or not, UN peace operations know too well that they operate in places where terrorists are present. The organization once thought its impartiality would be its shield, but since the 2003 bombing of its Baghdad headquarters, the UN increasingly finds itself a target. The way this issue is framed in the report suggests that the UN Secretariat, its bodies and its Member States can choose whether to cross this line. But the challenge of countering violent extremism is not going away, particularly in large swathes of Africa, Asia and the Middle East.

There is another dimension to the inability to ignore the problem: when it comes to peace operations, the organization's *real politik* dictates that the Secretariat must go where the Security Council sends it.

In another attempt to set limits, the Panel drives to make exceptions for offensive operations such as those in Somalia in 1993 and DRC in 2013. The report's position is more like a red smudge than a clear line, perhaps illustrating differences of opinion within the diverse group of experts.

> Extreme caution should guide the mandating of enforcement tasks to degrade, neutralize or defeat a designated enemy. Such operations should be exceptional, time-limited and undertaken with full awareness of the risks and responsibilities for the UN mission as a whole. [Paragraph. 118]

A number of points in the report regarding mission needs and member state contributions, when taken together, should prompt a discussion about how to better match supply and demand. Should the UN Security Council scale back ambitious missions if troops cannot be found to staff them? Or should Western countries contribute more forces to present and future operations? African troops are already the major peace enforcers in **Somalia** and **DRC**. A Nigerian-led coalition recently confronted Boko Haram. Is the UN being bypassed for the hardest jobs on the continent?

While not strangers to the system, the members of the Brahami and Prodi panels were more outsiders looking in than the sixteen "eminent personalities" of this latest body, many who have decades or, in some cases, entire careers working inside the system. Chairman Jose Ramos Horta, a former president of Timor-Leste, is one of the relative "outsiders," but even he has been a beneficiary of one of the most successful series of UN peace operations that brought his country to independence and made it the 192nd member of the UN. After leaving national politics, Horta headed a UN political mission in Guinea Bissau. His deputy, Ameerah Haq, served in Afghanistan as a deputy SRSG before leading a later mission in Timor-Leste. Haq then served as Under-Secretary-General for the Department of Field Service (DFS), the UN headquarters group supporting all peace operations. This collective experience gives *Uniting for Peace* a level of bureaucratic detail not found in *Brahimi*.

These insiders lived with the problems they are trying to resolve with this report. After a decade and half between reviews, the laundry list of required fixes is still lengthy. UN peace operations need improved analysis, planning and more realistic mandates. They need faster deployment, better administration and clearer communications with those communities they are sent to help. There are many changes that the **Department of Political Affairs**, **Department of Peacekeeping Operations** and **DFS** would like to do. But they are blocked from doing them, or simply have not yet got around to them. The report's contents will not surprise those within the house.

Such closeness can also be a weakness. For those struggling with lack of coordination inside the system, the proposal to create an additional Deputy Secretary-General position responsible for peace and security is a reasonable option. It is explicitly drawn from the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change in 2004, another review stacked with eminent people. The proposal is a peace offering, rather a declaration of internecine warfare that the revolutionary idea of a merger of DPKO and DPA would provoke. Rearranging the Secretariat's organizational chart excites those who work in Turtle Bay, the New York neighborhood around the UN's iconic headquarters. It means nothing to those who think it is a resort in Vanuatu.

There are a number of such instances where the report does not seek to reinvent the wheel when it feels a good idea has been too long ignored. It calls on the General Assembly to adopt a 2011 report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) to, among other things, establish a separate account for the funding of special political missions. Such frequent references to older reports reflect poorly on the glacial pace of change at the UN. They also raise red flags about obstinate forces arraigned against systemic change. But *Uniting for Peace* has modest objectives. It is incrementalist, not revolutionary; more a notable milestone than a *Brahimi*-like landmark.

In coming months, a joint team from the Secretariat will produce an implementation report providing some "low hanging fruit" for the Secretary-General in the twilight of his ten years in office. In September, the Obama-Biden peacekeeping summit will provide Ban Ki-moon with a ready-made platform to talk about the future of UN peace operations. If this report is to endure, then his successor will need to see some merit in its recommendations and adopt them as their own. There will be two other overlapping reports in coming months to digest: the Review of UN Peacebuilding Architecture, chaired by former Guatemalan Foreign Minister Gert Rosenthal, as well as the High-Level Review on Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security, headed by Panel member Radhika Coomaraswarmy.

To assess whether *Uniting for Peace* might succeed will take time. It will also require a more comprehensive response from member states. As the permanent representatives in New York are never shy of pointing out, it is their organization and they are the ones running the show at the United Nations. Most crucial will be the P3 – the U.S., Britain, and France – who pay the largest share for peace operations. Other potential spoilers include the G77, particularly if they see the report as being too Western. African Member States pushed for the proposal to pay for their operations from the UN peacekeeping budget, but can they marshal the support of wealthy nations to pay for it? The Panel is attuned to the reluctance of Member States to pay more for peacekeeping. It makes a pitch that with the planned winding down of some peace operations through sequencing, its recommendations could be cost-neutral. But can the Security Council restrain itself, and will Member States buy this argument?

In calling for change, the report urges others to act and uses many synonyms for the UN's Member States including the Security Council, regional organizations, troop contributing countries, host countries, and the ever-amorphous "international community." A reader is left with a sense that the report's authors are disappointed with their relative inertia in the face of so many crises. "Member states have not sufficiently invested in addressing root causes of conflict," the report says. "The protection of civilians is a national responsibility," it notes. "Member States should provide the necessary resources and lend their influence," it urges. The report treads a fine line between chiding and chastising. The panel is an advisory body and its recommendation can simply be ignored – but how will member states react if they feel they are being lectured to?

*Brahimi* had something of this tone, too. "The Secretariat must tell the Security Council what it needs to know, not what it wants to hear," is one standout line. "When recommending force and other resource levels for a new mission, … it must set those levels according to realistic scenarios that take into account likely challenges to implementation." These strident lines were written when the world was unipolar and led by the Unites States, a simpler time that a senior Secretariat official describe recently as "a golden age of peacekeeping." But we now live in a time of multiple centers of power. This is only a problem for those who got used to getting their own way. Those able to now veto or simply obstruct feel empowered.

With the U.S. and Russia once again using the organization as a proxy battlefield, the "challenges to implementation" are numerous. NATO's perceived over-reach in UN-sanctioned operations in Libya, for example, created the mistrust that has led to inaction in Syria. Then again, as Jean-Marie Guéhenno has written in *The Fog of Peace*, his memoir of peacekeeping in the 21st century, we still have not overcome the "lingering damage to the idea of collective action" caused by the 2003 invasion of Iraq.

As a young man, Jose Ramos Horta was known from the 1970s as a fearless and blunt advocate for his country's independence. He walked the corridors of the UN as an outsider for more than two decades. In releasing his panel's report to the Member States, he sounded like one of those polite New York diplomats he once railed against, whose careers were made in meeting rooms. "We heard your call to reform not only the system's instruments but also the mindset required to deliver them," Horta said. But neither now nor a decade and a half ago is there a consensus among Member States that a more assertive, effective, or efficient Secretariat is a desired outcome. As he noted in the same speech, Member States and regional organizations made almost 60 submissions. In other words, the majority did not contribute.

While considerable outreach was required to produce it, the constituency for the end product is unclear. Is this document preaching to the converted, or is it a persuasive argument for some Member States to stop sitting on the fence? Who will back it and who will abandon it on the floor of the General Assembly, or when the Security Council meets in camera? Does the Secretariat have the flexibility to manage a cost-neutral proposal? How will its demands for more resources resonate back in the cash-strapped capitals? Fifteen years ago Brahimi identified the challenge to reforming the system in its first paragraph:

> Without renewed commitment on the part of Member States, significant institutional change and increased financial support, the United Nations will not be capable of executing the critical peacekeeping and peacebuilding tasks that the Member States assign to it in coming months and years.

*Brahimi*, too, was humble in its expectations and yet we are now revisiting some of the same topics. "The Panel believes that the above recommendations fall well within the bounds of what can be reasonably demanded of the Organization's Member States," Brahimi's team wrote in August 2000. Has Jose Ramos Horta's panel learnt lessons from the predecessors? The subsequent fifteen years of bloody history have demonstrated the limits of the power of the United Nations "to prevent all tensions and violence and end wars," Horta wrote in his cover letter transmitting the report to the Secretary-General on 17 June. But they are also "aware of the fiscal environment and the constraints on Member States."

In its modesty, *Uniting for Peace* may be laying the foundation for its own success. It is a practical technocratic document that has eschewed ideas that are too big or frightfully expensive. It is a sensible blueprint for what needs to change, and will be with us for some years to come. It can be a primer for the next secretary-general. But like *Brahimi*, the biggest challenge for *Uniting for Peace* comes with implementation. This Secretary-General and the next must be more leader rather than conference organizer. They will need to build a consensus among member states that these reforms are crucial for more efficient peace operations, and it is in their interests to support them. In this handover from one SG to the next, there is a window where change again seems possible at the United Nations. With the right leadership, the next report on peace operations can be less déjà vu and more a progress report.

*Jim Della-Giacoma is the Deputy Director of the Center on International Cooperation at NYU. | Twitter: @jimdella*

# A BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT OF THE HIGH-LEVEL PANEL ON PEACE OPERATIONS

by Jean Arnault

**BROADLY SPEAKING, THE AGENDA FOR PEACE AIMED TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF NEW OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED BY DRAMATIC IMPROVEMENTS IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS - THE NEW WORLD ORDER - WHEREAS SUBSEQUENT REPORTS WERE AN EFFORT TO ENABLE THE UN TO COPE WITH NEW AND SEVERE CONSTRAINTS.**

A year ago, when the Secretary-General put forward the idea of a new review of peacekeeping operations, he naturally referred to the **Brahimi report**. He argued that as the 15-year anniversary of that report approached, it was necessary "to take stock of evolving expectations of UN peacekeeping and how the Organization can work toward a shared view of the way forward."

Because the terms of reference of the new panel included (besides peacekeeping operations) field missions focused on prevention, mediation and peacebuilding, the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) decided early on to take as its frame of reference the **1992 Agenda for Peace**, which defined the panoply of tools that the UN could bring to bear on the resolution of conflicts in the aftermath of the Cold War.

However, clearly the more relevant comparator for the exercise carried out in 2015 is the 2000 effort by the Brahimi panel to find answers to the challenges resulting from setbacks suffered by UN peacekeeping in the 90s. Indeed, both in content and tone, the 2000 and 2015 reports stand in rather stark contrast to the seminal 1992 Agenda. The latter still contemplated the case of inter-state conflicts, while the former two were focused exclusively on intra-state situations. In 1992 the novelty in peacekeeping was the fielding of UN operations "to help implement settlements that have been negotiated by peacemakers", whereas the 2000 and 2015 reports largely focused on the challenge to peacekeeping "where there is no peace to keep".

Broadly speaking, the Agenda for Peace aimed to take advantage of new opportunities offered by dramatic improvements in international relations – the new World Order – whereas subsequent reports were an effort to enable the UN to cope with new and severe constraints. The **1995 Supplement to an Agenda for Peace** described these as "unforeseen, or only partly foreseen, difficulties", namely a succession of new wars, often within newly independent states, with a marked religious or ethnic character and often involving unusual violence and cruelty, particularly against civilians.

In that sense, against the background of high expectations raised in the immediate aftermath of the Cold War, the **HIPPO** faced in 2015 the same sobering realities as the Brahimi panel in 2000, and to a large extent the Secretariat as early as 1995:

- Because UN involvement continues to represent the highest possible level of internationalization of a conflict – or any other domestic issue – it continues to face reluctance on the part of individual governments and, increasingly, regional groupings to entrust the Organization with sensitive issues such as preventive diplomacy and the negotiation of internal conflicts.

- Because UN peacekeeping forces continue to be a "pickup team" whose constituent parts often do not share the same language, doctrines, training and equipment, or national interests, the UN continues to struggle to move beyond the mostly symbolic role it played in support of pre-existing agreements and become a relevant actor in situations of active hostilities.

- Because the UN continues to be a relatively minor player in the field of international cooperation, and continues to be fragmented among a multiplicity of autonomous agencies, it continues to face great challenges in the consolidation of peace in countries that painfully emerge from conflict.

As a result, whether in the areas of mediation, peacekeeping or peace consolidation, the ground covered in the Brahimi and the HIPPO reports is strikingly similar, as are many recommendations offered by the two panels. And it comes as no surprise that the HIPPO refers explicitly to the Brahimi report on key issues such as the protection of civilians or the use of force.

At the same time, while the UN has faced similar challenges in its effort to remain relevant over the past 20 years, each panel has been working in a different set of circumstances. Each has developed different perspectives on the same issues, and has produced recommendations with significant nuances. Let us look at three key areas: the use of force and the principles of peacekeeping; peacebuilding; and the challenge of having no peace to keep.

## THE USE OF FORCE AND THE PRINCIPLES OF PEACEKEEPING

Following the frustrating experience of the use of force by UN peacekeeping operations in Somalia and Bosnia, the 1995 Supplement to an Agenda for Peace drew very clear-cut conclusions:

> "Nothing is more dangerous than to ask [a peacekeeping operation] to use force when its existing composition, armament, logistic support and deployment deny it the capacity to do so. The logic of peacekeeping flows from political and military premises that are quite distinct from those of enforcement; and the dynamics of the latter is incompatible with the political process that peace-keeping is intended to facilitate. International problems cannot be solved quickly or within a limited time. Conflicts the United Nations is asked to resolve usually have deep roots and have defied the peacemaking efforts of others. It is necessary to resist the temptation to use military power to speed them up. Peacekeeping and the use of force (other than in self-defence) should be seen as alternative techniques and not as adjacent points on a continuum".

Five years later, with the experience of the genocide in Rwanda etched deeply in the UN consciousness, the Brahimi panel would take the exact opposite stance: "As the United Nations has bitterly and repeatedly discovered over the last decade, no amount of good intentions can substitute for the fundamental ability to project credible force". In other words, not only is the use of force "other than in self-defence" not incompatible with peacemaking, it is a pre-requisite for its success – and the imperative of saving lives trumps allowing for the slow ripening of peace negotiations. Robust rules of engagement should enable a peacekeeping mission to defeat "those who reneged on their commitments to a peace accord or otherwise seek to undermine it by violence". And the Brahimi panel proceeds to revisit the traditional principles of impartiality, consent and use of force in self-defence with a view to accommodating the centrality of the use of force in peacekeeping affairs.

In truth, the 1995 and 2000 positions are not as incompatible as it may seem: the 1995 report argued that the UN is in no position to impose a peace settlement by military means, which the Brahimi panel would not disagree with ("force alone cannot create peace"). And the Brahimi report argued that once a peace agreement has been achieved, it is essential that UN peacekeeping forces should be capable of defending it against violent challengers. The authors of the 1995 report would also not disavow this. At the same time, the central message to emerge from the Brahimi report was that the UN suffered from a critical deficit in military credibility, and its continued relevance to international peace and security depended on acquiring the "robustness" that was so tragically lacking in Rwanda.

Fifteen years later, the course of international affairs was bound to have an impact on the HIPPO's perspective on the use of force. And in this regard change had been fast and momentous. Indeed, barely one year after the completion of the Brahimi report, a major shift took place in the international community's approach to conflict with the start of the Global War on Terror in the wake of 9/11.

Together with the prodigal branding of rebel groups as "terrorists" with whom dialogue and political negotiations were deemed unacceptable, the 2000s witnessed the ascendency of the "primacy of the military" in the settlement of conflicts. Significantly, with perhaps the particularly bloody exception of Sri Lanka, application of military force led nowhere to a termination of conflict. In Iraq and Libya, it arguably made the conflicts worse. Moreover, as some Western powers, reeling from setbacks in **Afghanistan** and Iraq, seemed to distance themselves from population-centered counter-insurgency campaigns, they switched to an even less political approach: counter-terrorism.

In the field of peacekeeping, politics also appeared to take a backseat to military deployment. In Darfur and the DRC, the two largest-ever peacekeeping missions ended up almost entirely disconnected from any political process. The Security Council was increasingly embracing forceful "protection of civilians" as central to the mandate of peacekeeping missions. But it did so without a corresponding effort to find long-term political solutions that could make the protection of civilians effective and sustainable.

Looking at the current state of affairs in relation to ongoing conflicts and emerging trends in peacekeeping, the HIPPO considered that the first fundamental shift for the UN to maintain and increase its relevance in peace and security had to be the restoration of the "primacy of politics" and the imperative of reconnecting the use of force with political strategies. To quote the **HIPPO's report**, this meant recognition of the fact that, without denying the importance of credible deterrence in peacekeeping, "politics is the true force multiplier".

The report further elaborated on what was intended by "politics" when UN forces deployed in situations of ongoing conflicts, namely the search for negotiated solutions. This is essentially in contraposition to what has often been a flaw of counter-insurgency campaigns from Vietnam in the 60s to Afghanistan in the 2000s: the vigorous extension of state institutions, particularly the armed forces, as a substitute for negotiations and accommodation. It also contrasts with the general proposition that political settlements are not achievable with "terrorists". While the report accepts that negotiation with "violent extremism" is a very difficult proposition, it draws lessons from NATO's late recognition that there was no military or state-building solution to the Afghan insurgency. It reasserts the "hallmark" of the UN's approach to conflict resolution: to explore peaceful options with all combatants regardless of military affiliation on the basis of "legitimate interests and grievances".

## IN THE FIELD OF PEACEKEEPING, POLITICS ALSO APPEARED TO TAKE A BACKSEAT TO MILITARY DEPLOYMENT.

Again there is no contradiction as such between the Brahimi report and the HIPPO: the former does list "political support" as the first key condition for the success of complex operations. And the latter emphasizes the critical need for every stakeholder at the UN – Security Council, TCCs, and Secretariat – to provide missions with the capacity to act as a credible deterrent to threats against civilians. But the nuance in emphasis is not unimportant: the HIPPO's first concern is to reconnect the use of force with the politics of peaceful settlements as a pre-condition for deployment, and to impress upon the Security Council the need to bring its political leverage to bear as a pre-condition for success.

And just like the Brahimi report tinkered with the "principles of peacekeeping" to make way for the centrality of the use of credible force, the HIPPO revisited them to accommodate the centrality of negotiated political solutions to internal conflict. It follows the Brahimi report in distinguishing impartiality from the "equal treatment of all parties in all cases for all time", but it also stresses the UN mission's equidistance from belligerents in key areas: the protection of civilians "irrespective of the origin of the threat"; the promotion of human rights of all actors "including the belligerents regardless of affiliation"; and the search for political solutions based on "the legitimate interests and grievances of all parties".

The HIPPO's report acknowledges that consent from parties other than the government may be difficult to secure, but emphasizes that consent from all actors must be relentlessly sought:

*"Obtaining and maintaining the consent of the other parties remains an important objective of any mission and should be pursued to the extent possible. This strengthens the view of the Panel that any peacekeeping mission must be a part of a robust political process in which the UN is deeply involved, and must continuously seek to build consent to the UN role and presence through an impartial posture".*

Finally, the HIPPO proposed that between the overly restrictive "use of force in self-defence" in the 1995 report and the overly militaristic and unrealistic "use of force in defence of the mandate" in the Brahimi report - indeed, many if not most tasks contained in UN missions' mandates are not apt to be implemented by military means - the use of force should be clearly specified in each mandate.

## PEACEBUILDING

Peacebuilding is another area where the HIPPO report adds updated perspective to the concerns contained in the Brahimi report. In the Agenda for Peace, peacebuilding was defined as activities undertaken by the international community to supplement the efforts of national actors with a view to consolidating peace. However, as noted in the 1995 Supplement to the Agenda for Peace, while the situation is clear when a mission is deployed on the back of a previously negotiated peace agreement, in other circumstances the question of the ownership of peacebuilding becomes blurred. The Brahimi report gave peacebuilding activities a much more critical role than previous reports:

"When complex peace operations do go into the field, it is the task of the operation's peacekeepers to maintain a secure local environment for peace-building, and the peacebuilders' task to support the political, social and economic changes that create a secure environment that is self-sustaining."

But it did not dispel the ambiguities surrounding ownership, quite the contrary. Traditional ceasefire monitoring missions were explicitly meant to create conditions in which negotiations for a settlement could take place. In that sense, international peacekeepers were to enable national actors to deliver peace. In the Brahimi report – as in the practice of peace operations in many late 90s missions – peace was assumed to be "built" rather than "negotiated"; and international peacebuilders, rather than local actors, tended to be in the lead. A number of areas were singled out – elections needed the support of a broader process of democratization and civil society building, the police and the justice system should be reformed, and **DDR** should be undertaken – but the responsibility for designing those activities appeared to rest primarily with international actors based on their theory of change, rather than national actors. While it was stated that "effective peacebuilding requires active engagement with the local parties", it was unclear whether the degree of ownership of these local parties went beyond that of implementing agents of international designs.

In this regard, the Brahimi report reflected the international paradigm that emerged from the 90s, which assumed that during a "peacebuilding window" of a decade or so the international community could apply a series of generic reforms to "build back better" countries emerging from conflict. That approach encompassed reforms around a set of acronyms (e.g., **SSR**, DDR, **RoL**) that were assumed to be so universal and so powerful that the Security Council ended up including them automatically in its mandates without considering whether they were actually relevant to the settlement of the specific conflicts in the country concerned, or whether they had domestic constituencies.

While this ambitious approach seemed reasonable and realistic at the end of the 90s and the early 2000s, the picture was quite different by the time the HIPPO met in 2015. Over the past 15 years numerous attempts were made at full-spectrum transformation of countries at war, or emerging from war à la Afghanistan or Iraq, and even at remaking small countries not at war (Haiti comes to mind). More often than not these attempts proved disappointing and sometimes counter-productive. Many missions with ambitious mandates and a staff of international experts on police, judicial reform or DDR have been engaged year after year in attempting to implement their templates with very little impact on their target institutions and no tangible impact on the restoration of peace. Still, institution development was thought to be the winning strategy, and it tended to displace from the missions' agenda a political approach to contending local forces and interests.

Warnings were voiced both from academia and from international organizations that institution building was a much more uncertain and protracted affair than initially assumed, that formal institutions were not as relevant as initially believed, and that their functioning was so deeply contextual that it was risky for foreigners to play sorcerer's apprentice in cultures they did not have the time or the inclination to understand. To some extent, the lessons learned from the 2000s invited a return to the much more modest and cautious philosophy of the 1995 Supplement:

> "The United Nations is, for good reasons, reluctant to assume responsibility for maintaining law and order, nor can it impose a new political structure or new state institutions. It can only help the hostile factions to help themselves and begin to live together again. All too often it turns out that they do not yet want to be helped or to resolve their problems quickly".

The HIPPO did not conclude that efforts to strengthen institutions were irrelevant. It shared the view expressed by the World Bank, the G7+ and others that improvement in the field of justice, security, inclusive politics and jobs are generally positively correlated with peace consolidation. It actually stressed that alongside inclusive politics jobs and livelihood should be a much more prominent part of the international approach. However, it also argued − and this is a significant development in peacekeeping affairs − that particularly in contexts where there is no comprehensive peace agreement, which is the general rule these days, the Security Council should refrain from providing any substantive peacebuilding mandate until it has given the Secretariat and peace missions on the ground the opportunity to carry out the fullest possible in-field consultations with local actors on what peace building could mean to them in the particularly country and at the particular time when the mission is deployed. No element of the traditional international template should be mandated without prior understanding of its relevance to the grievances and interests that drive the conflict, and the prospect of a political settlement among national actors.

Incidentally, the approach advocated by the HIPPO fully dovetails with the peacekeeping philosophy so well articulated by Lakhdar Brahimi and Salman Ahmed in their 2008 essay "**In Pursuit of Sustainable Peace: the Seven Deadly Sins of Mediation**":

> "The people of the country concerned − the educated and the illiterate, the governors and the governed, the suspected perpetrators of the violence and the victims, the men and the women, alike − understand their own country far better than the foreign mediators who have just arrived on the scene. They will have to live with the consequences of the political process long after the mediator has departed. They also can help the mediator to identify where a potential course of action could lead to a dead-end, fail to command domestic support, or worse, exacerbate political divisions in the country and potentially provoke violence. It is therefore not only a question of shrewd diplomacy, but good sense and basic respect to listen to a diverse range of views in the host country."

Among others, this approach provides the fullest answer to the problem of supply-driven "Christmas tree" templates, whether pushed by vested interests at UNHQ, the donor community or the Security Council. The implications are profound: it means a restoration of national agency in peacekeeping, after more than a decade of template approaches where "national ownership" was more often than not an afterthought. For missions, it means a renewed emphasis on political approaches to peace consolidation, since for a protracted period in the life of a mission this consolidation will have to be achieved not so much through the building of formal institutions, but rather in their absence, or while they remain largely dysfunctional. It means a transformation of the mandating process, better adjusted to the reality of continuously evolving political and military situations. It also means a transformation of the budget process at the UN, which currently favors front-loading mission tasks and resources rather than allowing for ongoing re-adjustment of mission mandates depending on context.

## "NO PEACE TO KEEP"

It is a testament to the relevance of peacekeeping to international peace and security that it has been able to expand from strictly military missions dealing with inter-state conflicts in the 60s, 70s and 80s to the multidimensional missions assisting the resolution of internal wars in the 90s and 2000s. But it is also a testimony to its relative immaturity that it is still struggling after 70 years to define the limits of its "territory" relative to other fields of endeavor in the midst of continuing controversy among the UN membership.

After disastrous attempts at peace enforcement in the protection of humanitarian activities in Somalia and the protection of the notorious UN safe areas in Bosnia, the conclusion was drawn in the mid-90s that UN peacekeepers did not have what it took to deploy in situations where no agreement existed among belligerents, at least on a ceasefire. A few years later, the Brahimi report concluded from the Rwanda tragedy that the UN simply did not have a choice but to acquire the military robustness that would enable it to face its responsibilities when a political settlement it was deployed to assist collapsed, violence resumed and the lives of thousands were threatened or lost as a result.

Given these sharp swings, the HIPPO has taken a position that reflects both concerns: it accepts fully that the protection of civilians in armed conflict is a core principle of international humanitarian law and a moral responsibility for the United Nations. In addition to the moral and legal dimensions, it is a political and military imperative: indeed, as a foreign force confronted to local challenges, no UN mission can expect to remain politically or militarily relevant unless it enjoys support from the population where it has deployed. The HIPPO therefore agrees that missions have the obligation, and must be given the means, to protect civilians from armed attack.

Moreover, beyond the type of situations that the Brahimi report had in mind – missions sent to uphold peace but confronted with "lingering forces of war and violence" – it accepts as legitimate the deployment of UN missions even "in situations of violent conflict and in the absence of a viable peace process". It does so convinced that, in some cases, combined with the deployment of UN forces, the leverage available to influential members of the Security Council and the region can help create a political process where none existed, make a difference in the protection of civilians and bring the conflict under control.

But it does so very cautiously. It takes into account that the pursuit of robustness after the Brahimi report met great difficulties: key recommendations for stand-by forces, rapid deployment, adequate enablers, intelligence-gathering and other elements required for the "projection of credible force" by peacekeepers were not implemented. Denoting deep differences among member states,

the practice of hidden caveats continued to undermine command and control as it did 25 years earlier. In the end, throughout the 2000s, in spite of the Brahimi report the use of force against spoilers in the context of UN peace processes was more often than not carried out by national and regional forces – in Sierra Leone, Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, Timor-Leste, Haiti, Somalia, Mali and the DRC – rather than the UN.

The HIPPO insists that further progress can be made in the political and military capacity of peacekeeping forces, particularly if a consensus on peacekeeping is restored among member states. But it also believes that the composition and character of multinational, fundamentally heterogeneous, and to some extent disparate peacekeeping forces carries inherent limitations both in terms of deployment speed and military capability. It argues therefore that while UN multilateral peacekeeping can play a part in the management of today's violent environments, it will always critically depend on others – national or regional contributors – as "first responders", as "parallel forces" or as the primary protagonists in the control of conflict.

Peacekeeping proved to be a valid proposition in its original domain, the consolidation of inter-state ceasefires. It proved to be, with some tragic exceptions, a valid proposition in a very different context: the termination of civil wars. Confronted with a vastly more ambitious task, i.e. the global management of emerging conflicts and crises, it can again play a role. It could even be argued that it should play a much larger part – bearing in mind, in the wake of the controversy over NATO's intervention in Libya, the risks inherent in the intervention of non-UN actors authorized by the Council. Already in 1995 the Supplement to the Agenda for Peace pointed out "the danger that the States concerned may claim international legitimacy and approval for forceful actions that were not in fact envisaged by the Security Council when it gave its Authorization to them".

But the UN must not be taken as a substitute for the creation of the "global-regional peace and security framework" that the HIPPO calls for, and which it hopes the Secretary General will agree to lead. In 2007 the founding father of UN peacekeeping, Brian Urquhart, stressed:

> *"A new approach needs to be found, something between peace enforcement action by large and battle-ready national contingents made available under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, and the improvised, more or less symbolic, peacekeeping that served so well during the Cold War but has often proved inadequate since".*

This approach is not to be found by focusing on UN peacekeeping forces alone. It requires a new, multi-actor response. The global-regional framework will have to bring clarity to the relationship between national, regional and UN operations, an area where improvisation and ad hoc arrangements have prevailed to this day. In particular, it will have to review the political costs and benefits of several factors critical to the effectiveness and reputation of UN operations: the separation of regional initiatives or their integration under the blue flag (the case of the Force Intervention Brigade comes to mind); the re-hatting of first responders, and in particular re-hatting of troops from neighbouring countries; and the arrangements guiding the relationship between UN missions and parallel forces. There is very real urgency to this undertaking: the pressure on peacekeeping to do more than it can will not relent until this new architecture is in place.

*Jean Arnault was a member of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) and is a non-resident Senior Fellow at the Center on International Cooperation at NYU. He has been the head of UN peace operations in Afghanistan, Burundi, Georgia, and Guatemala.*

©ALEXANDRA NOVOSSELOFF

# LES OPÉRATIONS DE MAINTIEN DE LA PAIX : LE RÉALISME CONFRONTÉ AUX AMBITIONS

by Alexandra Novosseloff

## LES CASQUES BLEUS FACE À UNE NOUVELLE CRISE DE CROISSANCE?

Contrairement aux pronostics faits à la fin des années 90, le maintien de la paix n'a cessé de s'accroitre depuis, au point d'atteindre un nouveau pic de déploiement, avec la mise en place de deux nouvelles opérations (MINUSMA-Mali et MINUSCA-Centrafrique) et l'augmentation des effectifs de la MINUSS-Sud-Soudan. L'ONU déploie aujourd'hui plus de **125 000** personnes (civils, policiers et militaires) sur le terrain. Ces opérations évoluant dans des contextes particulièrement compliqués ont engendrés ce que l'on pourrait appeler une nouvelle "crise de croissance". Entre le déploiement de Casques bleus dans **un contexte de menace terroriste** (Mali), la création d'une brigade d'intervention ayant pour objectif **« de neutraliser les groupes armés »** de l'Est du Congo (RDCongo), l'envoi de troupes supplémentaires dans un contexte de résurgence de guerre civile (Sud-Soudan) et la création d'une énième opération (le 9e dispositif international depuis 1997) dans un pays sans Etat (RCA), beaucoup au sein du Secrétariat ont eu peur que les Casques bleus perdent leur âme dans des tâches qui ne manqueraient pas de les dépasser et avec des moyens toujours planifiés à l'économie. De ce fait, le fossé entre les décideurs du Conseil de sécurité et les contributeurs de troupes a continué de se creuser, et le malaise de certains contributeurs de troupes semblait de plus en plus grand face aux décisions prises

par le Conseil. A la crise de croissance risquait de s'ajouter une crise d'identité voire une crise de légitimité dont l'Organisation ne pouvait se permettre (après les échecs dont elle s'est vue affublée depuis des années, de manière d'ailleurs souvent injustifiée).

Dans ce contexte, le Secrétaire général a pris l'initiative de créer, à l'approche du quinzième anniversaire de l'adoption du **rapport** Brahimi (août 2000), un nouveau panel qui puisse « procéder à un examen approfondi des opérations de paix des Nations Unies » et contribuer au débat « sur la façon dont [elles] devraient s'adapter aux nouvelles exigences et sur les capacités et les ressources dont elles ont besoin pour s'adapter » (**réunion du Conseil de sécurité du 11 juin 2014**). Le Secrétaire général a senti soudain le besoin de donner des gages d'intérêt dans un domaine qu'il a largement délaissé pendant les près de dix années de son mandat (**voir l'analyse de Richard Gowan**). Un panel de haut niveau de 15 personnes a ainsi été **créé le 31 octobre 2014** ; il a rendu son **rapport** de 117 pages (surnommé HIPPO – *High Level Panel on Peace Operations*) le 16 juin dernier.

Ce nouveau rapport pour réformer les opérations de paix a-t-il été à la hauteur des attentes placées en lui et a-t-il relevé les défis posés (être stratégique et opérationnel à la fois, traiter de l'ensemble du spectre de la gestion de crises, faire des propositions concrètes pour améliorer les outils à disposition de l'ONU) ? Va-t-il créer ce nouveau *momentum* tant attendu pour faire entrer la pratique du maintien de la paix dans le XXIe siècle ?

## QUELLES PRIORITÉS POUR LES MOIS À VENIR ?

Au-delà des recommandations spécifiques du rapport qui doivent chacune faire l'objet d'un examen précis, il s'agit de voir quelles doivent être les grandes priorités des prochains mois pour l'ensemble des acteurs du maintien de la paix afin de redonner du souffle et de la cohérence à cette activité ?

*- Poser la spécificité et les limites du maintien de la paix sans se désengager des opérations existantes.*

Le rapport rappelle avec force qu'il faut « consolider les fondements » sur lesquels se basent les opérations de maintien de la paix et faire prévaloir la primauté du politique face à des solutions de toute autre nature. Il considère toutefois, dans le même temps, que ses principes (impartialité, consentement de l'Etat-hôte, usage de la force en cas de légitime défense) « doivent être interprétés progressivement et avec souplesse », et que les Casques bleus peuvent mener de manière exceptionnelle des actions d'imposition (Ce que la version française du rapport traduit de manière très approximative par « tâches de renforcement »…). Le HIPPO n'aurait-il pas du poser plus clairement, de manière plus autoritaire, les limites du maintien de la paix de l'ONU qui constituent en réalité sa spécificité (par rapport aux actions des autres organisations internationales) ?

Il faut rappeler avec force que les Casques bleus (peu interopérables, comme le rappelle le rapport) ne peuvent être efficaces dans des contextes de guerre civile ouverte, de contre-insurrection ou de contre-terrorisme ; ils n'ont pas les moyens d'employer la force armée de manière stratégique (c'est-à-dire être partial, combattre un ennemi identifié comme tel et le mettre sous sa coupe). Non seulement ceci est à l'opposé de l'esprit du maintien de la paix (tel que posé par l'Article premier de la Charte), mais les Etats membres ne donneront jamais au Secrétariat les moyens de s'engager dans une telle action dont seules des coalitions d'Etats puissamment armés ou des alliances militaires comme l'OTAN disposent. Jamais les Casques bleus ne disposent des capacités pour soutenir sur la durée l'usage de la force, qui ne peut alors être que tactique, limité et accompagné par une stratégie politique.

Ce constat, ce rappel, doit ramener les Etats membres à la raison, à savoir les objectifs des opérations de paix doivent être fonction de leurs moyens, ce que le rapport rappelle largement : « les mandats doivent être mis en cohérence avec les capacités ».

Ceci ne signifie pas, bien au contraire, que les Casques bleus ne peuvent utiliser la force armée, qu'ils seraient condamnés de manière intrinsèque à n'avoir qu'une action passive. Loin de là : ils doivent avoir et garder en toute circonstance une approche déterminée, robuste qui leur permet de se faire respecter par les parties au conflit. Ceci est une question d'attitude ; c'est aussi :

- *une question de moyens :* on revient toujours à l'adaptation des moyens au mandat et à la disposition de moyens mobiles qui font partie des capacités critiques de toute opération et qui lui évitent d'être statique ; c'est précisément toujours ce qui fait le plus défaut aux opérations de maintien de la paix, et en particulier l'absence **d'hélicoptères**.

- *une question de volonté* ; on pourrait dire de leadership et d'autorité, et

- *une question d'intérêt*, notamment des principaux contributeurs : on ne mène pas une action militaire d'envergure sans intérêt national ou stratégique qui la soutienne (au fond, **Pour qui meurt-on?**).

Quoiqu'il en soit, en toutes circonstances, leur action doit être guidée par une protection de la force adaptée à leur environnement et une posture robuste. Les deux doivent, comme le rappelle le HIPPO, être soutenus par une stratégie politique robuste qui doit être le fait non seulement des contributeurs de troupes et du Secrétariat, mais également et surtout des Etats membres du Conseil de sécurité et notamment des plus puissants d'entre eux. La force et l'autorité d'une opération de maintien de la paix face aux fauteurs de troubles de tous bords proviennent aussi voire avant tout de la pression exercée sur eux par un Etat extérieur puissant. C'est en jouant collectif que l'ONU dans son ensemble gagnera.

*- Rétablir la relation entre les différents acteurs du maintien de la paix à travers le renforcement de la coopération triangulaire.*

C'est en ce sens qu'une plus grande efficacité des opérations de paix passe aussi par un meilleur dialogue entre ses différents acteurs. Le HIPPO propose à cet égard que « *le Conseil de sécurité [adopte] un cadre systématique pour qu'un dialogue avec les pays fournissant des contingents ou du personnel de police et le Secrétariat soit engagé dès le début du processus d'élaboration du mandat* ». En dépit de l'adoption de la **Résolution 1353** en 2001 et de **l'initiative franco-britannique** en 2009, le Conseil de sécurité n'a toujours pas créé une enceinte adéquate pour consulter les contributeurs de troupes, sans que ses prérogatives décisionnelles ne soient bien entendu amoindries. Les « réunions de contributeurs de troupes » organisées par le Secrétariat sont des lieux trop formels et non adéquats ; le **groupe de travail** du Conseil sur les opérations de maintien de la paix n'a jamais pris la mesure de cet enjeu. Une autre enceinte, plus informelle, restreinte, doit être mise en place.

Pour que les représentants des contributeurs de troupes, du Conseil de sécurité et du Secrétariat puissent échanger plus facilement sur les problèmes rencontrés, ils doivent se réunir dans des groupes restreints et en format politico-militaire (pour que l'expertise militaire puisse être également prise en compte). Pourquoi ne pas prévoir, par exemple, des réunions avec les dix plus importants contributeurs d'une mission, puis avec les dix suivants, l'essentiel étant que les contributeurs ayant la charge des principales opérations militaires de la mission puissent être réellement consultés. Il pourrait aussi y avoir un format purement militaire et un

autre purement civil. Une chose est sûre, les grandes messes où tout le monde attend que son voisin prenne la parole en premier ne peuvent donner de grands résultats.

En parallèle, à l'occasion de l'examen de chaque mission, le Conseil de sécurité pourrait également se réunir de manière informelle avec les représentants des Etats-hôtes pour faire passer les messages nécessaires de coopération avec les Nations Unies. En effet, les fauteurs de trouble ne sont pas uniquement les représentants de groupes armés ou les opposants politiques à un Etat ; ils peuvent aussi être les autorités élues de cet Etat. Le Conseil de sécurité doit pouvoir leur rappeler de manière ferme et discrète qu'ils doivent respecter ses décisions, prises au nom de l'ensemble des Etats membres de l'Organisation, à moins de risquer d'être l'objet de certaines mesures (sanctions, **menaces de retrait**, voire conditionnement de l'aide au développement).

*- Mieux calibrer les objectifs des opérations de maintien de la paix et mieux partager le fardeau*

Le panel y fait allusion tout au long de son rapport sans vraiment l'affirmer nettement. Les opérations multidimensionnelles ne sont-elles pas allées trop loin, n'ont-elles pas suscité trop d'attentes par rapport aux capacités réelles de l'Organisation ? « Qui trop embrasse mal étreint », dit le proverbe. Le concept même de protection des civils n'a-t-il pas conduit l'ONU à élargir tant et plus le périmètre de son action ? Ce qui doit rester un objectif incontournable de tout déploiement, de toute action des Nations Unies, peut-il réellement, et de manière réaliste, se décliner en tâches à accomplir quand on connaît la superficie immense des territoires à couvrir ? Là encore, le rapport rappelle qu'« il faut aligner les besoins sur les moyens », mais on sait aussi que les moyens sont limités.

## JAMAIS LES CASQUES BLEUS NE DISPOSENT DES CAPACITÉS POUR SOUTENIR SUR LA DURÉE L'USAGE DE LA FORCE, QUI NE PEUT ALORS ÊTRE QUE TACTIQUE, LIMITÉ ET ACCOMPAGNÉ PAR UNE STRATÉGIE POLITIQUE.

Non seulement les Casques bleus ne peuvent tout faire, mais on ne peut les envoyer n'importe comment (voir les tribunes de deux éminents praticiens du maintien de la paix : **Satish Nambiar** et **Jean-Marie Guéhenno**). On en revient à la question de la spécificité de l'action des Casques bleus. La poser permet aussi de mieux identifier sa valeur ajoutée dans la division des tâches qui se joue dans la réponse internationale aux crises et de mieux travailler avec les uns avec les autres. Ici, il est nécessaire de réfléchir à un meilleur soutien mutuel entre forces des Nations Unies, forces parallèles et forces régionales. En effet, le HIPPO le dit et le répète, l'ONU ne peut faire tout toute seule et considère que des priorités doivent pouvoir être établies de manière plus précise. Nous devons entrer dans une « ère de partenariats », comme l'a répété à plusieurs reprises le Secrétaire général. Ceci nécessite également que chacun prenne sa part du fardeau, pas seulement du gâteau.

On en revient aussi à la question des moyens et des responsabilités de chacun. De fait, beaucoup de missions ayant un mandat de protection des civils sont sous-équipées en termes de capacités mobiles et critiques : est-ce tolérable dans des contextes de menaces asymétriques ? Est-il encore concevable que des Etats membres déploient dans les opérations de l'ONU des personnels

sous-équipés, sous-entraînés et sous-formés, comme l'ont montré les récentes allégations d'abus sexuels envers les populations locales ? Ici, le blâme est sans doute plutôt à porter sur les Etats membres que sur le Secrétariat, pris dans la nécessité de trouver toujours plus de troupes et dont les pouvoirs disciplinaires sont très **limités**.

On touche ici aussi à la question du commandement et du contrôle des opérations menées par l'ONU (voir les recommandations du **rapport du Challenges Forum** à ce sujet). Les Etats ne donnent jamais, quelles que soient les circonstances (et ceci n'est pas propre à l'ONU) l'entier contrôle de leurs soldats à l'Organisation. Ainsi, si les objectifs d'une mission pour laquelle ils ont commis des troupes changent, ils peuvent être amenés à demander à leurs troupes, en passant outre les instructions du Département des opérations de maintien de la paix ou du Représentant spécial sur place ou encore de son Commandant de force, de ne pas appliquer les ordres donnés. C'est là que la coopération triangulaire prend toute son importance et est un instrument indispensable à l'absence de restrictions d'emplois (caveats) cachées. L'autorité du seul Secrétariat ne pourra les empêcher d'apparaître en temps de crise.

## UNE NOUVELLE OPPORTUNITÉ À SAISIR POUR RÉFORMER LE MAINTIEN DE LA PAIX ?

Activité centrale des Nations Unies, le maintien de la paix s'est construit depuis toujours de manière *ad hoc*, sur le terrain, au fil de multiples crises, en s'adaptant continuellement aux nouveaux défis. Mais, comme l'analysait récemment **Jean-Marie Guéhenno**, les demandes en Casques bleus ont toujours dépassé leurs capacités opérationnelles réelles. De ce point de vue, le HIPPO rappelle avec force les défis actuels en s'insérant dans la lignée, pas si longue que ça, des rapports clés du maintien de la paix (**Agenda pour la paix**, rapports sur **Srebrenica** et le **Rwanda**, **rapport Brahimi**, **Capstone Doctrine**, **New Horizon**) produits depuis le développement de cette pratique (1956 pour les puristes, 1948 pour les autres).

Ce nouveau rapport, le premier de cette envergure depuis 15 ans, doit constituer une opportunité de réexaminer comment améliorer non seulement la mise en œuvre des opérations de paix mais aussi et surtout trouver les moyens de forger un nouveau consensus entre ses acteurs (Conseil de sécurité, contributeurs de troupes, Secrétariat) sur leur conduite. Aucune excuse ne doit pouvoir empêcher le Conseil de sécurité et l'Assemblée générale (et ensuite leurs organes subsidiaires, comme le Comité spécial des opérations de maintien de la paix ou le groupe de travail du Conseil de sécurité sur les opérations de maintien de la paix), chacun à leur niveau et selon leurs compétences, d'appuyer ses recommandations (et celles qui seront proposées par les rapports de mise en œuvre du Secrétaire général) comme ils l'avaient fait à la suite de la sortie du rapport Brahimi (**Résolution 1327**). Même si ce rapport intervient au moment où le Secrétaire général pense plus au bilan qu'il va laisser – sa réforme de 2007 séparant le soutien logistique des opérations au sein du Secrétariat est loin de faire l'unanimité et le HIPPO considère d'ailleurs qu'il faudrait revenir dessus – qu'à de nouveaux chantiers à entreprendre, il faudrait que ce rapport puisse créer un nouveau momentum pour forcer les Etats à s'impliquer davantage en termes de réflexion, en termes financiers et en termes de moyens humains, à ce que le fardeau du maintien de la paix soit mieux partagé. Ceci doit être l'objectif des Etats membres à l'occasion du 70e anniversaire des Nations Unies et des mois à venir.

En juin 2010, l'Assemblée générale a organisé un **débat** sur le maintien de la paix à l'occasion du dixième anniversaire de la publication du rapport Brahimi. A cette occasion, son auteur a rappelé combien la plupart des recommandations contenues dans son rapport restaient valables : les mandats devaient être clairs ; les opérations de maintien de la paix devaient bénéficier des moyens suffisants pour exécuter les tâches qui leur étaient confiées ; ces opérations ne pouvaient pas tout faire et être déployées n'importe où ; elles ne pouvaient en aucun cas se substituer aux processus politiques ; les capacités d'analyse politique

du Secrétariat devaient être améliorées ; il fallait faire effort sur la qualité plutôt que la quantité des troupes déployées ; le dialogue avec les principaux contributeurs de troupes devait être amélioré, de même que la collaboration avec les acteurs en dehors des Nations Unies. Cinq ans après, le HIPPO est là pour rappeler que ces recommandations restent d'actualité (il en reprend d'ailleurs un très grand nombre) si l'on souhaite que le maintien de la paix soit toujours aussi ambitieux.

## UNE CHOSE EST SÛRE, LES GRANDES MESSES OÙ TOUT LE MONDE ATTEND QUE SON VOISIN PRENNE LA PAROLE EN PREMIER NE PEUVENT DONNER DE GRANDS RÉSULTATS.

Mais voilà, le veut-on encore ? Le peut-on encore ? Ceci est peut-être aujourd'hui la seule question pertinente sur laquelle se pencher. Le maintien de la paix du XXIe siècle doit-il être obligatoirement ambitieux, exporter des modèles idylliques de sociétés rêvées ? Tout au long du rapport, le panel souligne à quel point les opérations de maintien de la paix manquent de moyens. Son erreur n'a-t-il pas été de penser que les Etats membres des Nations Unies veulent encore investir tant et plus dans des solutions de longue haleine dont leurs dirigeants ne verront sans doute pas l'issue ? Au fond, n'est-il pas trop ambitieux ? Aujourd'hui, à la croisée des chemins, deux solutions s'offrent donc à l'ensemble des Etats : soit être plus modestes dans les ambitions assignées aux opérations de paix (donc mieux cibler des objectifs bien particuliers et atteignables), soit donner les moyens réellement adaptés aux mandats qui dépasseront de fait les neuf milliards de dollars de **budget** annuel de ces opérations, même si ce coût n'équivaut, il faut le rappeler, qu'à 0,5% des dépenses militaires mondiales.

Les tensions budgétaires actuelles ne peuvent que plaider pour la première d'entre elles. Le réalisme commanderait la modestie dans l'approche. La question est de savoir si les Etats membres des Nations Unies arriveront à s'y astreindre.

*Dr. Alexandra Novosseloff is a Senior Visiting Fellow at the Center on International Cooperation.  Dr. Novosseloff is also a research associate at the Centre Thucydide, a senior expert at the Peace and Security Section of the Global Governance Institute in Brussels.

*Alexandra Novosseloff is Senior Visiting Fellow at the Center on International Cooperation at NYU.  | Twitter: @DeSachenka*

© REUTERS

# KEEPING PEACE AMONG PEACEKEEPERS

by WPS Sidhu

**THE WORD PEACEKEEPING DOES NOT APPEAR ANYWHERE IN THE CHARTER OF THE UN. YET, EVER SINCE THE FIRST PEACEKEEPING OPERATION WAS LAUNCHED IN MAY 1948 IN THE MIDDLE EAST, THAT ONE WORD EVOKES THE VERY RAISON D'ETRE OF THE WORLD BODY.**

The word peacekeeping does not appear anywhere in the Charter of the UN. Yet, ever since the first peacekeeping operation was launched in May 1948 in the Middle East, that one word evokes the very raison d'etre of the world body. Since then the UN has deployed 70 peacekeeping operations with some significant triumphs (East Timor) and spectacular tragedies (Srebrenica and Rwanda). Despite 67 years of experience UN peacekeeping has been in distress for the past few years.

One reason for this is the serious disconnect between the changing nature of conflict and the ability of UN to respond to them. In earlier missions UN peacekeepers merely had to observe or monitor peace agreements or ceasefires that had been accepted by belligerent states. Today, they are increasingly deployed in areas where there is little or no peace among warring parties.

Another reason is the deep divide between countries that mandate and fund peacekeeping operations (the five permanent UN Security Council members (P-5) and large donors, such as Japan and Germany) and the biggest troop contributing countries (TCCs, such as India, Pakistan and Bangladesh) whose personnel actually carry out the operations in the field. As the mandates have got tougher without a commensurate increase in funding or equipment TCCs are demanding a greater say in making the mandates and more funding. This so-called gold versus blood contest further stymied UN peacekeeping.

A third factor is the institutional divide within the UN between the department of peacekeeping operations—who lead the military operations—and the department of political affairs—who seek political solutions to the conflict. Additional factors, such as sexual abuse by peacekeepers and the inability to deal with violent extremism and terrorist groups, highlighted the deep crises in UN peacekeeping.

Against this backdrop the much anticipated **UN report** *Uniting Our Strengths for Peace—Politics, Partnership and People* released last week is significant. Prepared by a 16 member high-level panel led by former Timor-Leste president Jose Ramos-Horta the report is both candid in its critique and bold in some of its recommendations.

The report calls for "four essential shifts" in UN peace operations: first, peace operations should be designed with politics and political solutions in mind rather than the other way around; second, instead of a one-size fits all, peace operations should be tailor-made for each specific situation; third, there needs to be greater collaboration, consultation and integration within the UN system to prevent conflict and ensure peace; fourth, the focus of the UN secretariat should shift from the headquarters to the field so as to carry out the mandates.

The report also puts protection of civilians front and centre but also calls for greater convergence between "expectation and capabilities". It categorically calls for UN troops not to undertake counter terrorism operations and also separate themselves from other non-UN military operations in the area. Additionally, the report stresses the need to hold peacekeepers more accountable for sexual abuse. In recognition of intra-secretariat tussles, the report proposes the creation of additional positions and offices, notably that of an additional deputy secretary-general for peace and security and a single "peace operations account" to finance all peace operations and related activities in the future.

While it is unlikely that all the recommendations will be accepted in the politically charged UN, many of them are likely to find wide support among UN members.

For India, the report offers a unique opportunity to leverage its peacekeeping credentials (which are strongest in the field) to play a leading role in determining the nature and scope of future peace operations.

However, India should not use the report only to confine itself to peace operations. If India plays its cards well the report would also be very useful to strengthen its case for reform of the Security Council and permanent membership. The new Indian leadership is certainly up to the task.

This article was originally published in *LiveMint* on June 21.

**WPS Sidhu** *is a Visiting Fellow is Senior Visiting Fellow at the* **Center on International Cooperation at NYU** *and a non-Resident Fellow at the Brookings Institution*

# PEACEBUILDING

PEACEBUILDING SUPPORT OFFICE (PBSO) ADVISES, SUPPORTS AND REPRESENTS THE INTERESTS OF THE COUNTRIES EMERGING FROM CONFLICT. IN ADDITION IT HELPS ENSURE PREDICTABLE FINANCING FOR EARLY RECOVERY AND SUSTAINED FINANCIAL ENGAGEMENT OVER THE LONGER TERM. © UNICEF PHOTO

# THE "GAPING HOLE" IN THE UN FOR SUSTAINING PEACE

by Sarah Hearn

**THE UN MUST RECOGNIZE THE PRIMACY OF NATIONAL POLITICS IN DEVELOPING SOLUTIONS TO CONFLICT; IT MUST MAKE MORE FLEXIBLE USE OF THE WHOLE UN SYSTEM AND THE WHOLE SPECTRUM OF TOOLS FOR SUSTAINING PEACE (INCLUDING AND BEYOND MILITARY OPERATIONS); IT MUST BUILD STRONGER PARTNERSHIPS WITH KEY ACTORS (SUCH AS MULTILATERAL DEVELOPMENT BANKS AND THE AFRICAN UNION); AND IT MUST BE MORE FOCUSED ON THE FIELD AND ON PEOPLE (NOT THE NEW YORK MACHINERY).**

In 2015, multiple reviews of the UN's peace efforts have added to the collective realization that UN peace operations – designed in the 1990s to support post-civil war peace deals – may have reached their limits for maintaining international peace and security. A UN High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations has just published its **report** on the UN's peace and security efforts. A commission led by Madeleine Albright and Ibrahim Gambari has concluded a **panel report on global governance**. A study will shortly be released on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security. Amidst all this activity, an advisory group of experts released in June a new independent review of the UN's peacebuilding efforts, *The Challenge of Sustaining Peace*.

None of these reviews are revolutionary in their recommendations. What they do is coherently synthesize known problems and deficits. They recognize that great power politics is not favorable to a strengthening of the UN; they recognize that today's transition to a multipolar order makes consensus-building on UN reform extremely difficult; and they recognize that the UN is but one among many international peace, security and development actors. Indeed, many of these reviews' recommendations have been circulating for years, but they have usually not been implemented for political reasons.

*The Challenge of Sustaining Peace* is a robust analysis of the UN's challenges and does offer sorely needed recommendations. But international attention must now focus on implementation. Ideas are now required for early actions and commitments that can build a longer-term consensus on deeper changes to the UN. Before change, however, must come debate.

*The Challenge of Sustaining Peace* feeds into the UN's ten-year review of its "peacebuilding architecture," which marks one decade since the **2005 World Summit**, whereby world leaders made a bold commitment to **establish a just and lasting peace all over the world**. They established a new UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) with the purpose of helping countries transition from war to peace. The PBC and the **Human Rights Council** were launched with great fanfare as major new UN institutions. They were the institutional legacies of then Secretary-General Kofi Annan, who was determined to implement important lessons of Srebrenica and Rwanda: a need for more resolute UN monitoring and action on human rights violations, and more coherent and effective international responses to conflict.

The PBC's founders hoped it would unite international actors in providing more coherent and sustainable attention to maintaining peace. Ambition extended to the disjointed peace and security, development, human rights and humanitarian arms of the UN, as well as the wider international system. A **Peacebuilding Fund** was established to provide emergency assistance and start-up funding for peace plans. A **Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO)** was charged with providing analysis, with building the skills of the whole UN system, and with supporting international coordination.

Ten years on, *The Challenge of Sustaining Peace* echoes the diagnosis of 2005: there is a *gaping hole* in the UN's machinery for sustaining peace. It adds that there have been serious shortcomings in the UN's efforts to fill it. The review's authors argue that too many parts of the UN system work in silos, all contributing disjointed pieces to an ever more complex puzzle of local and transnational conflicts, and UN and other international responses.

At the **organizational level**, the authors argue that the different arms of the UN still fail to work together, and the PBC and PBSO have often added to the silos rather than rise above them to build international coherence. The links between the UN and other parts of the multilateral system are often ad hoc and thus fall short of serious and systemic global coordination driven by the UN.

At the **policy level**, they argue that the UN's approach to sustaining peace is deeply flawed, tending to focus on supporting governments to the detriment of building trust between states and societies. Too often, the UN confuses "national ownership" – which is the sine qua non of an enduring peacebuilding process – with supporting ownership by a narrow group of governmental elites. The review also underlines that the UN makes no coherent or dedicated monitoring effort to help countries prevent conflict in the first place. And the review argues that the UN's development and human rights actors pay insufficient attention to building inclusive development processes that can sustain peace.

The result of these *gaping policy and organizational holes* is that funding and attention is not sustained for the time needed to restore trust between states and societies, or to build inclusive and functioning institutions that prevent further conflict.

- The *Challenge of Sustaining Peace* makes a series of recommendations for addressing the UN's gaping holes:

- Charge the Peacebuilding Commission with bridging the divide across all UN inter-governmental bodies (the Security Council, the General Assembly, the Human Rights Council, and the Economic and Social Council) to better support conflict prevention and sustainable peacebuilding.

- Make major improvements in the analytical capacity and authority of the PBSO to strengthen the PBC and the UN system.

- Introduce significant improvements to the UN's skills, knowledge and approaches on the ground for sustaining peace, as well as better operational planning: longer UN mission timelines, better transition planning between the spectrum of UN peace and development operations, and joint planning and delivery for sustaining peace in the long term.

- Build partnerships with other global and regional multilateral institutions to help sustain peace, especially international financial institutions (IFIs) and regional organizations.

- Provide more predictable funding for peacebuilding programs over the time it takes to develop institutions and resolve the drivers of conflict.

- Focus more efforts on building national governmental and non-state leadership, and encourage inclusion in processes to sustain peace.

All of these findings are complementary with the parallel review of peace operations, *Uniting Our Strengths for Peace*, which makes four main points: the UN must recognize the primacy of national politics in developing solutions to conflict; it must make more flexible use of the whole UN system and the whole spectrum of tools for sustaining peace (including and beyond military operations); it must build stronger partnerships with key actors (such as multilateral development banks and the African Union); and it must be more focused on the field and on people (not the New York machinery).

The problem is that *The Challenge of Sustaining Peace* and *Uniting Our Strengths for Peace* **both remind us that too little has changed since previous reviews**. The General Assembly last reviewed the Peacebuilding Commission In 2010, **recommending** very similar, although less ambitious, reforms to peacebuilding. The UN Security Council and General Assembly took note of the 2010 review's recommendations, but few, if any, were implemented. The reasons are political, and sceptics – including this author – have **expressed reservations in the past** about the depth of political will at the UN to address shortcomings.

When attempts leading in to the 2005 World Summit to expand the Security Council's permanent membership failed, the PBC quickly became a safety valve for international discontent. The bargains over the PBC's mandate in the months following the Summit reflected these tensions. The PBC was given little authority and decision-making powers, and burdensome New York-focused procedures quickly mushroomed. The **successes enjoyed by the PBC had been driven by good inter-personal relations**, but not by a comprehensive UN drive to strengthen capacities for sustaining peace on the ground.

While both reviews offer robust analyses of many of the problems and solutions, neither review separates out the more feasible "quick wins" from an assessment of the steps needed to achieve more contentious structural change in the UN. International attention must now focus on mapping out those potential actions, acting quickly on the "low hanging fruit" in 2015 and 2016, as well as identifying steps necessary to transform the UN system in the longer-term.

## "EARLY WINS"?

The UN's ten-year peacebuilding review process is split into two parts: an independent review, and inter-governmental negotiations. The Security Council and General Assembly are expected to adopt resolutions on *The Challenge of Sustaining the Peace* later this year. In parallel, Ban Ki-moon is expected to produce a report in response to *Uniting our Strengths for Peace*. A response that incorporates recommendations from both reports would make most sense, but there may be structural impediments to this. While *Uniting for Peace* is a report commissioned by and for the Secretary-General, Sustaining the Peace is not. The peacebuilding review is an inter-governmental process. Ban's implementation report may make references to the Review, but will probably not address it in any detail. In confining his response to peace operations, he would be perpetuating the existing the problem: a UN that works in silos.

> ### WHILE QUICK WINS NEED TO FOCUS ON ACTION ON THE GROUND, LONGER-TERM DIALOGUE AND CONSENSUS SHOULD BE BUILT AROUND DEEPER STRUCTURAL TRANSFORMATION OF THE UN.

With an integrated approach, the Secretary-General could have listed a range of quick win proposals and commitments focusing on strengthening the UN on the ground. As Challenges to Sustaining Peace recommends, the Secretary-General could commit to agreeing on "peacebuilding compacts" upfront with countries exiting conflict. These would govern the timelines and benchmarks for mission transitions. He could task the UN on the ground with reassessing its approaches and deepening its knowledge base on building state-society relations. He could task his leaders on the ground to work with national actors to develop sustainable strategies that are intended to far outlive any given UN mission. He could commit to deepening his partnership with the World Bank, as well as other existing and new multilateral banks, to drive significant efforts into inclusive development. A UN that empowers all national leaders, that empowers women and youth, and that helps to leverage larger and more transformative investments in solutions such as infrastructure and job creation, is a UN that could have a more lasting positive effect on people's daily lives.

In these regards, UN leaders can and must all push on open doors in 2015 and 2016. In Addis Ababa in mid-July, the **Third International Conference on Financing for Development** committed to ensuring funding for the poorest, most vulnerable and conflict-affected countries (although no new resources or concrete plans were put on table). In September in New York, new **Sustainable Development Goals** (SDGs) will be adopted to replace the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The SDGs contain a number of radical changes from the MDGs, including a new goal for building peaceful and inclusive societies, access to justice for all, and inclusive, accountable and effective institutions. While the world does not yet know how to achieve this goal, it reflects an international consensus on the links between peace and development that did not previously exist.

**The peaceful societies goal** opens up a significant global opportunity to align peace agreements, national development and peacebuilding priorities, and international assistance, and to conduct better monitoring and prevention of risks to development. This emphasis on development draws in a far wider range of pivotal actors, including rising powers and new multilateral development banks, civil society and the private sector. The UN's challenge is to mandate and empower its leadership on the ground to work with all actors and resources to sustain the peace. In 2015 and 2016, Ban Ki-moon could identify pilot countries for rolling out a new UN approach.

In 2016, Turkey will host the **World Humanitarian Summit**. Here too, countries, the UN, civil society and the private sector can agree to joint solutions for monitoring and preventing emergencies, for reducing global risks, and for sustainably resolving protracted displacement and crisis.

In actively taking advantage of these opportunities, the Security Council and General Assembly might mandate some up-front "no-brainer," "bite-sized" changes to the UN. They could mandate the PBC to work with the UN's inter-governmental bodies on sustaining the peace across conflict-affected countries (the review recommends a range of sensible ad hoc working practices). The Security Council could request the PBC's advice on progress against transition benchmarks in conflict-affected countries. It could also mandate the PBC to incorporate the UN and international system to promote coherent efforts towards sustaining the peace across countries on the Council's agenda. The General Assembly and Security Council have weak track records when drawing on the PBC. But if member states want to expand partnerships and encourage more inclusivity, it would be wise to give the PBC teeth, and hold it accountable for progress.

The General Assembly, for its part, could exact more coherent performance from the UN development system for supporting peaceful and inclusive societies through the **UN Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review** (a review of the UN's global development performance, functions and resources), which will next take place in 2016.

## LONGER-TERM STRUCTURAL CHANGE OF THE UN

While quick wins need to focus on action on the ground, longer-term dialogue and consensus should be built around deeper structural transformation of the UN. These more difficult tasks of filling the UN's gaping holes will realistically only fall to the next Secretary-General from late 2016 onwards.

She could organize dialogue around creating a system-wide model for improved monitoring response to conflict risks. While few if any member states will object to the concept, the practice may prove contentious because the current application of the 'sovereignty' principle makes it difficult to take early action before the onset of conflict. Building consensus around increased investment in development and conflict prevention would be more straightforward. In this regard, the new Secretary-General should focus on building strong links between the UN and the rising powers and new development banks. As these entities' global roles in peace and development grow and evolve, they are in learning mode. The next five years present a window of opportunity to build strong partnerships beyond the Bretton Woods order.

The UN secretariat's structures and capacities could also be reviewed. Given sufficient political will, the reset button could be pressed on PBSO, potentially addressing the coherence of the UN secretariat by merging multiple departments with duplicate responsibilities. But here too, reform will be tough. Hostility and power politics from within the Secretariat will slow reforms unless countries are seriously willing to forgo control of national appointments to the existing structures. The case has yet to be made that a significant reform exercise in New York would lead to the kinds of changes to people's lives that would merit a Secretary-General's finite political capital. Perhaps it would be better if the next Secretary-General focused on empowering her people on the ground, advancing "bite-sized" changes to the bureaucracy in New York.

## THE GLOBAL-REGIONAL FRAMEWORK WILL HAVE TO BRING CLARITY TO THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND UN OPERATIONS, AN AREA WHERE IMPROVISATION AND AD HOC ARRANGEMENTS HAVE PREVAILED TO THIS DAY.

New tools and responses will also be needed to address emerging drivers of conflict, including the growth of violent extremist movements that are impervious to the UN's current approaches for mediation, conflict resolution and development. Here too, international consensus must first be built on the drivers of contemporary conflicts and appropriate responses. These challenges will continue to fall to the UN on the ground. Some of the UN's responses may be operational, but many may also be in the normative space. There are significant gaps in international norms on cyber security, regulation of new weapons technologies (such as 3D printed weapons), maritime security, and tackling illicit financial flows, among many other areas that are key to contemporary conflicts.

None of this year's UN reports will be headline grabbers. They rightly focus on the UN's operational coherence, management and politics, because these are the building blocks to improving the UN's performance. What actors need to do now is articulate clear pathways, achieving some quick wins in 2015 and 2016, and instigating longer-term processes towards deeper structural reform. In the coming months, candidates for Secretary-General should articulate their campaign priorities. How to fill the UN's gaping holes for sustaining peace must surely come high on their priority lists.

*I am grateful to colleagues at CIC and participants at the Beijing Conference on "Emerging Views on Global Peace Practice" (hosted by AFSC, QUNO, SSRC and UNA-China) for their comments, insights and discussions during the preparation of this essay.*

*Sarah Hearn is an Associate Director and Senior Fellow for Global Development at the Center on International Cooperation at NYU |*
*Twitter: @SarahEHearn*

©DAG HAMMARSKJOLD FOUNDATION

# CAN THE UN REDUCE GLOBAL CONFLICT?

by Sarah Cliffe

**THE REPORTS HAVE SOME GOOD IDEAS THAT ARE NOT FULLY DEVELOPED, GIVING THE SENSE THAT THE PANEL MEMBERS COULD HAVE COME UP WITH MORE DEFINITIVE SOLUTIONS GIVEN A BIT MORE TIME.**

There has never been a better time to renew the UN's commitment to "save succeeding generations from the scourge of war". Recent headlines have been dominated by crises old and new: from ISIS in Iraq and Syria to Boko Haram in Nigeria; from war in Yemen, Libya and South Sudan to fighting in the east of Ukraine. Global conflict levels have risen in the last three years after two decades of decline. So the UN's two independent panel reports (**Uniting for Peace, the Challenge of Sustaining Peace**) are timely. How do their recommendations stack up to the challenge?

If "don't do stupid stuff" is your mantra, as President Obama once said in rather more robust terms, these are thoughtful, well-judged instruction manuals. In an era of much criticism of the UN, they also underline the international organisation's achievements: keeping the peace (most of the time) in over **11 million square kilometres** of territory with just **106,000 uniformed peacekeepers**. That's like policing an area the size of Europe with fewer officers than England and Wales. What is notable in the reports? They concur that political solutions are needed for political problems. While robust security plays a part, force alone is

not the solution. They agree on the importance of giving a political voice, jobs and social opportunities to those excluded, engaging communities. They stress the need for a wider partnership on the political, security, justice, social and economic levers needed to avoid escalating crises, and emphasise global-regional partnerships, in particular with the African Union. They underline the long timelines needed to build peaceful institutions, a timely reminder when the failure of institutions in Iraq ten years on has spurred such a brutal blowback in the form of ISIS.

Reflecting the panel members' deep international experience, both panels have produced detailed, largely well-crafted recommendations for changes in the UN bureaucracy to make it more agile, more focused on prevention and more able to protect civilians in the face of changing threats. Yet in the end the reader comes away with a sense that the response is not quite up to the challenge: not fiddling while Rome burns, but more handing out safety matches rather than putting out the fire.

Two points are missing. First, both reports are largely silent on the violent extremist movements, like ISIS, that have dominated popular and political concerns this year. Some of the obvious failures to prevent conflict – Libya, Yemen, and Mali – have occurred in these contexts. Uniting for Peace rightly notes that the UN does not have the capability to be used as a military response to these threats. But neither report lays out what a more comprehensive approach might look like strategically, with effective security that still builds respect for justice ("just security" as called for by the recent commission on global security, justice and governance); nor operationally, with smart ways to counter these movements politically and economically, demonstrating that citizens are better governed outside the "Caliphate" than inside. The UN has another chance to grapple with this challenge in a forthcoming action plan to prevent violent extremism in November. It cannot afford to appear to be ignoring the threat.

Second, the reports have some good ideas that are not fully developed, giving the sense that the panel members could have come up with more definitive solutions given a bit more time. These cover a broad spectrum of international action, with more focus on upstream prevention; drawing on national agency and local solutions; compacts between the international community, represented by the Security Council, and conflict-affected countries who need help; using over-the-horizon guarantees of security to protect against new and recurring risks; and bringing together an international coalition for prevention.

The current UN Secretary-General is nearing the end of his term. Most of the ideas above, as well as some recommended greater structural changes, will need to wait for his successor. While the temptation will be toward a very cautious UN response for now, there is nevertheless a chance to make international peace-building efforts stronger before the incumbent SG leaves, including at the upcoming peacekeeping summit in September. A strong SG's response to these thoughtful reports will have twofold benefits. First, it can achieve consensus on some practical building blocks at the UN. Second and most importantly, it is more likely to put the SG on the right side of history: ensuring as part of his legacy that he has rung the warning bell on the urgency of action needed to avoid escalating conflict, and he has rung it loud and clear.

*Sarah Cliffe is the Director of the Center on International Cooperation at NYU. | Twitter: @sarah_cliffe*

U.S. LT. COL. WILLIAM CLARK TALKS WITH AFGHAN GENERAL ABDUL RAZIQ DURING A JOINT PATROL ALONG THE BORDER WITH PAKISTAN IN 2009. © EMILIO MORENATTI / AP

# WHAT I SAW IN AFGHANISTAN

by Barnett Rubin

**TWO POSSIBLE MODELS COULD KEEP THE AFGHAN STATE AND CIVIL SOCIETY OPERATING AT CLOSE TO THE CURRENT LEVELS. THE FIRST IS TO KEEP ASSISTANCE COMING INDEFINITELY.**

When the late **Richard Holbrooke** was the Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, he would periodically invite members of Congress to breakfast meetings with his staff, on which I was serving. On September 16, 2009, we met with Representative Nita Lowey, the chair of the State and Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee. As chair of the subcommittee, Lowey had more authority over funding for civilian activities in Afghanistan than anyone else in the U.S. Congress. She was also the representative of Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's home district, and Clinton attended the meeting.

Holbrooke declared the meeting to be on the record, since my former boss at the Council on Foreign Relations, Holbrooke's friend Les Gelb, was there covering it for a profile of Clinton. Before Lowey arrived with Clinton, Holbrooke cautioned us, "She gives us the money." Lowey told us that a chorus of influential members was questioning why we were spending so much money

in Afghanistan. The women's caucus and others in Congress were up in arms about the lack of progress on women's rights and fighting corruption, and about the ongoing dispute over the results of the August, 2009, Presidential election. Transforming Afghan society, Lowey argued, would take a long time and would be a permanent drain on the U.S. budget. Holbrooke responded, "Transforming Afghan society is not our mission. Girls' education is a big issue in many places. We are in Afghanistan because of our national-security interests."

Toward the end of the meeting, Holbrooke surprised me by asking me to summarize the work I was doing on a **political settlement with the Taliban**, which he generally tried to shield from exposure even within the government. At that time, we were trying—and failing—to get reconciliation onto the agenda of the policy review led by President Obama. In the papers we drafted, Holbrooke prohibited use of the term "political settlement" in favor of an inter-agency-friendly euphemism that we came up with: "threat reduction." I outlined the concept of reconciliation for Lowey, noting that it would be possible only if the Taliban separated itself from Al Qaeda. Lowey looked at me with some surprise. If the Taliban was not with Al Qaeda, she said, we wouldn't get a cent from Congress.

No one who knew Afghanistan before 9/11 can fail to note the remarkable changes that have taken place there: the dramatic increase in life expectancy and decrease in child and maternal mortality rates; the elections for President, parliament, and provincial councils; the distribution of millions of cell phones, many connected to the Internet; the flourishing of the mass media; the construction of office and commercial towers, roads, and, airports; and, perhaps most important, the spread of education, which is creating a generation of professionals who, as they move into positions of influence, are sure to transform the country. And yet, after thirty-seven years of continual warfare, the population is traumatized. Both civilian and military casualties are on the rise. Extreme poverty, vulnerability, and violence, especially against women, are pervasive, as are government corruption and other abuses of power. And all of the progress hangs by a thin, fraying thread— Afghanistan depends on foreign aid to finance two thirds of the government's operating budget and virtually all of its development projects and national-security forces.

Many, including myself, have criticized the mistakes, misconceptions, and organizational dysfunctions that contributed to the shortcomings of efforts to build or strengthen the state in Afghanistan. But such terms presume a common goal of building peace and stability, whereas the U.S.'s "clear and focussed goal" in Afghanistan, as defined by President Obama has been "to disrupt, dismantle and defeat Al Qaeda in Pakistan and Afghanistan, and to prevent their return to either country in the future." The reason that the U.S. government has sacrificed thousands of lives and spent hundreds of billions of dollars on Afghanistan is because Al Qaeda attacked the United States while its leadership was based in Taliban-ruled Afghanistan. Other countries joined mainly because the United States took the lead. The intervention in Afghanistan was a counter-terrorist intervention. That, not analytical errors or bureaucratic politics, is why some U.S. policies proved to be obstacles to peace and stability.

The conflict between the goals of counter-terrorism initiatives and peacemaking began at the U.N. talks on Afghanistan in Bonn, Germany, in November and December of 2001 (generally known as the Bonn Talks), in which the U.N. brokered a political settlement among Afghan groups opposed to the Taliban. The current regime in Afghanistan is based on that settlement, which included élites of the former royal regime (many from high-ranking Pashtun tribes and most of whom had been exiled since at least the early nineteen-eighties) and the armed groups, mostly non-Pashtun and Islamist, that were leading the fight against the Taliban on the ground. The U.N. team at Bonn, which was led by the Special Representative of the Secretary General Lakhdar Brahimi and on which I served, saw its mission as a continuation of the work of the U.N. Special Mission to Afghanistan, which had

been trying, for years, to broker peace between the Taliban and the groups fighting them. Brahimi accepted that the ongoing war made it impossible to invite the Taliban to Bonn, but the agreement was meant to launch a process that would enable them to be incorporated. Multiple studies on political settlements of civil wars have concluded that the more inclusive the settlement, the more durable the agreement.

The Bonn Agreement did make Afghan government and politics more inclusive, but it could not overcome U.S. counter-terrorism policy, which dictated the exclusion of the Taliban and was supported by a broad international consensus. The day after the signing of the agreement, December 6, 2001, the Taliban leadership agreed to a truce with President Karzai in return for an amnesty that would allow them to live in security and dignity. U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld overruled it, saying that there would be no negotiated solution. In a meeting in his office in November, 2008, President Karzai told me that soon after his inauguration, on December 22, 2001, he received letters of support from Taliban leaders who had returned to their villages. These leaders were soon hunted down by U.S. Special Forces; some of those who escaped, such as Mullah Baradar, became leaders of the insurgency.

## ALL OF THE PROGRESS HANGS BY A THIN, FRAYING THREAD— AFGHANISTAN DEPENDS ON FOREIGN AID TO FINANCE TWO THIRDS OF THE GOVERNMENT'S OPERATING BUDGET AND VIRTUALLY ALL OF ITS DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS AND NATIONAL-SECURITY FORCES

In the U.N. office in Jalalabad in May, 2002, I met Haji Ruhullah, the nephew of Jamil-ur-Rahman, the founder of the Salafi movement Jama'at al-Da'wa, a group allied with the Taliban. I had come to Jalalabad at Brahimi's request to report on the second round of indirect elections to the Emergency Loya Jirga. Ruhullah was trying to participate. He had brought a binder full of biographies and photographs of his movement's candidates. Three months later, on August 21, 2002, U.S. soldiers came to his village, in Kunar province, arrested him, and sent him first to Bagram and then to Guantánamo. Since his release, in 2008, he has been living peacefully in Afghanistan, but he and his fellow former detainees are not always inclined to accept the legitimacy of a government based on a process from which counter-terrorism policy excluded them.

The American-led **intervention in Afghanistan** began with the C.I.A.'s transfer of tens of millions of dollars, in cash, to the leaders of armed groups. On September 24, 2001, while the C.I.A. was starting to deliver knapsacks and cartons of hundred-dollar bills to commanders in Afghanistan, Richard Haass, then the head of policy planning in Colin Powell's State Department, convened a meeting (in which I participated) to discuss the future of Afghanistan. In the first part of that meeting, a State Department official told a representative of the Rome group, a group of exiles led by the former Afghan king Zahir Shah, that his office needed to better account for the expenditure of the modest grant that the U.S. was giving it. No more funds would be disbursed without receipts.

But in that meeting we did not discuss oversight of the far larger funds appropriated by the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee to pay commanders, at first to fight the Taliban and then to provide goods and services, including security, to U.S. and NATO troops through private companies the Afghan groups controlled. The U.S. did not include the expenditures of covert or military operations in the investigation of corruption until mid-2010, when several task forces began to oversee military contracts, though

not C.I.A. contracts. This contracting with Afghan power holders, the total size of which is difficult to determine, provided much of the financing for the country's patronage networks. That is why President Karzai accused the U.S. of financing his opponents and weakening the government. He was wrong to think that the U.S. did it intentionally, but it did it nonetheless.

Here is an illustration. In November, 2009, I was invited to Fort Bragg, in North Carolina, to participate in a daylong training for the leaders of the 82nd Airborne Division before their upcoming deployment to Afghanistan. During lunch, I sat with a group of soldiers, some of whom had already been through one or more deployments in Afghanistan. One of them told me that he had been stationed at the principal U.S. military base at Bagram. Perimeter security, he said, was the responsibility of a private company headed by a former Afghan commander. The commander's brother had a factory that supplied cement to the base for construction. The commander, he noted, was the most powerful Afghan in the district. The profits that the commander and his brother earned from contracts far outweighed any capacity-building or rule-of-law assistance received by the local administration. Such contracting may not amount to corruption in the legal sense, but it conveyed the message that power derived from operational and financial links to the U.S. rather than from the legal authorities.

One case in which the U.S. started a serious effort to counter corruption illustrates a different aspect of the problem. In early 2009, the Obama Administration deployed the recently established Threat Finance Cell (T.F.C.) from the Treasury Department to Kabul to investigate terrorist financing. Initially, based on assumptions inherited from the previous Administration, the investigations focussed on the link between narcotics revenue and Taliban funding. But the investigators kept following the money, which eventually led them to the New Ansari Money Exchange. The more the T.F.C. investigated New Ansari, the more the subject of the investigation broadened beyond terrorist financing.

On September 14, 2009, Rina Amiri, a fellow senior adviser to Holbrooke and a former United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan official, was sitting next to me at the weekly gathering co-chaired by Holbrooke and the White House director for Afghanistan and Pakistan, Doug Lute, when a Treasury Department representative handed out a classified PowerPoint presentation about the investigation. As Amiri and I paged through the slides, our astonishment mounted at the relationships it revealed. As **Dexter Filkins** reported in the Times in 2010, New Ansari was "suspected of moving billions of dollars out of the country for Afghan politicians, drug traffickers and insurgents. Kabul Bank [a private bank that collapsed after being looted by shareholders in a Ponzi scheme] used the firm, whose dealings are nearly impossible to track, to transfer at least $60 million out of the country, a bank shareholder said."

The first arrest resulting from the investigation was of Mohammed Zia Salehi, the chief of administration for the National Security Council of Afghanistan. The **Times reported** that "Salehi often acts as a courier of money to other Afghans, according to an Afghan politician who spoke on the condition of anonymity because he feared retaliation." Salehi was soon released from detention, under pressure from President Karzai. He had once worked as a translator for the former militia leader (now Vice-President) Abdul Rashid Dostum, one of the commanders funded by the C.I.A. to topple the Taliban in northern Afghanistan after the 9/11 attacks. The Times also reported that Salehi was "being paid by the Central Intelligence Agency, according to Afghan and American officials."

There is no indication that the C.I.A. intervened to have Salehi released or did anything in violation of U.S. law. It was carrying out the mission that the President assigned to it—"to disrupt, dismantle and defeat al Qaeda in Pakistan and Afghanistan"—which involved paying Afghan officials for information or collaboration, even though, from the standpoint of Afghan law, those payments

constituted illegal corruption. One part of U.S. policy corrupted Afghan officials while other parts tried to investigate and root out corruption. Given the interest that defined the mission, concerns about corruption did not trump those of covert action.

Corruption is not a problem solely because it wastes money and undermines trust in the government. It can prevent the government from functioning. On March 5, 2015, John Sopko, the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, sent a letter to a number of military commands describing a fiscal crisis. The Afghan government could not meet its "budgetary obligations," which mainly consisted of paying the salaries of employees, including teachers and health-care workers (but not security forces). One of the likely reasons for this is corruption in the collection of customs, the government's largest source of the domestic revenue. U.S. officials estimated that corruption took about half of the potential customs revenue, according to Sopko.

While some corruption resulted from weak oversight of the customs service, a larger problem was the domination of border points by U.S.-funded militias. Abdul Raziq, the security commander of Kandahar Province, was previously the commander of the border police at the customs point between Kandahar and Balochistan, where he **is reported to** have engaged in a profitable trade in smuggled used cars as well as the usual narcotics. Human Rights Watch also implicates Raziq in extrajudicial killings and the torture of detainees, including the "**application of a power drill to their heads.**" The U.S. military, however, has backed him and credits him with securing Kandahar City and expelling the Taliban from nearby rural districts. Even if President Ashraf Ghani wanted to remove him, for any number of reasons, he would have to weigh those considerations against the fact that Raziq's security forces are responsible for the defense of Kandahar. (Raziq has denied all allegations of wrongdoing.)

## HOWEVER LONG THE TROOPS STAY, MILITARY OPERATIONS WILL STILL FAVOR TACTICALLY EFFECTIVE QUICK FIXES THAT COLLAPSE WHEN THE TROOPS LEAVE, AS THEY WILL SOME DAY.

Furthermore, elimination of corruption in customs would be only a partial solution to the problem of funding the government. Customs revenues constitute about one third of domestic revenues, which currently pay for no more than one quarter of the national budget. Therefore, roughly speaking, even eliminating all corruption and doubling the customs revenues would enable the country to pay for less than half of its budget. And the budget does not account for donors' direct expenditures, including, crucially, the billions of dollars spent by the U.S. on Afghan national-security forces. As a result, the solvency, security, and stability of Afghanistan depend upon the wisdom and generosity of the Congress of the United States.

The pattern of assistance through institutions that the Afghan state cannot sustain is not the product of mistaken models. It is the result of an assistance program designed to support the immediate needs of the military campaign. In the spring of 2010, as U.S. commanders tried to apply General David Petraeus's counterinsurgency doctrine to Kandahar, the military proposed a quick fix to the city's electrical supply: hooking up the city's distribution network to diesel generators and paying for the fuel. That would generate employment and good will. U.S. civilian officials objected that the Afghans would never be able to afford the millions of dollars of diesel fuel required. But, according to one military official interviewed at the time, "This is not about development—it's about counterinsurgency." Kandahar got the diesel generators.

Five years later, the Department of Defense will terminate funding for the diesel by this fall, pulling the plug on this unsustainable project and on thousands of factories and homes. The U.S. has no convincing plan for the supply of electricity when it cuts the funding, according to a **recent report by SIGAR**.

Today, Abdul Raziq claims that he has secured Kandahar, pushing the Taliban back more than fifty miles from the city. But what will happen after the autumn of 2015? Unemployment will rise, the economy will falter, and more young men may join the insurgency. If security deteriorates, the usual voices in Washington will criticize President Obama for withdrawing troops too soon. But, however long the troops stay, military operations will still favor tactically effective quick fixes that collapse when the troops leave, as they will some day. This is not the fault of the military: it has tried to carry out the task that the President assigned it. But the problem of Kandahar's electricity illustrates why military interventions are unlikely to provide a framework for stability.

Two possible models could keep the Afghan state and civil society operating at close to the current levels. The first is to keep assistance coming indefinitely. In that unlikely case, as Representative Nita Lowey foretold, a peace process might be a liability. Though a settlement with the Taliban could reduce the cost of the security forces, it would also reduce the perception that Afghanistan is a source of threats that require a sustained response.

The second model is the one that I believe President Ghani is trying to implement: to start Afghanistan on the path to greater self-sufficiency and sustainability. Ghani appears to believe that such a path first requires peace with Pakistan and insurgents, cooperation with all the country's neighbors to make Afghanistan into a transit hub or "roundabout," and then the development of extractive industries for the country's **vast mineral deposits**. Without a quick turnaround in global perceptions of the risks associated with investing in Afghanistan, capital will not come. Furthermore, since Afghanistan is a landlocked country, whose northern neighbors are also landlocked, it cannot connect domestic investments to world markets without efficient and economical transit through Pakistan and Iran.

That, more than any political motivation, most likely explains the speed and radicalism of President Ghani's turn to China and attempted rapprochement with Pakistan. It also illustrates the tremendous stake that Afghanistan has in any easing of tensions between the U.S. and Iran. When Ghani came to Washington in March, the media focussed on adjustments to the troop re-deployment schedule and pledges of assistance. But what Ghani needs most is political and diplomatic support, backed up by investment, to support a peace process, provide incentives for its success, and enable Afghanistan to start generating revenues to sustain its own state.

This article was originally published by *The New Yorker* on July 1 2015

*Barnett Rubin is a Senior Fellow and Associate Director of the Center on International Cooperation at NYU* | ***Twitter: @BRRubin***

# WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY

© JUSTAPLATFORM

# MISSED OPPORTUNITIES: GENDER AND THE UN'S PEACEBUILDING AND PEACE OPERATIONS REPORTS

by Anne Marie Goetz and Rob Jenkins

**APART FROM THE IMPERATIVES OF PREVENTING (AND PROSECUTING) WAR CRIMES AGAINST WOMEN AND INCREASING THEIR NUMBERS IN UN MISSION STAFF, MANY UN MEMBER STATES AND SENIOR UN OFFICIALS LACK AN UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE TO PROMOTE WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN PEACE AND SECURITY PROCESSES.**

Gender issues are now a regular feature of the international community's approach to promoting peace and security. Two high-profile reports recently issued by the UN – on **peace operations** and the **organization's peacebuilding architecture** – include significant content on the role that women play in war and its aftermath. Both reports stress the need to see women as agents of conflict prevention and resolution, rather than just victims in need of protection.

However, neither report succeeds in overcoming the 'add women and stir' curse familiar to advocates of gender mainstreaming in peace and security institutions. The reports fall short of addressing the structural issues that result in women's exclusion from peace and security processes, both domestically and internationally. Neither report diagnoses the shortcomings of existing efforts

to implement what has come to be known as the **women, peace and security agenda**. Taken together, the two reports represent a missed opportunity to identify a coherent set of reforms to ensure that existing commitments are fulfilled.

The headline finding of *Uniting Our Strengths for Peace*, the Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, is that speeding up force deployment and improving peacekeeper training are less important to the success of peace operations than the ability to understand local politics, particularly the prospects for 'spoilers' to undercut an agreement between warring parties. The report's key recommendation in this area is to strengthen the UN's conflict and political analysis capacity, in part by merging existing units within the **Department of Political Affairs (DPA)** and the **Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO)**. The creation of a new Deputy Secretary-General position (for peace and security) is also proposed. But nowhere in the political analysis section does the report address gender – a major social cleavage that affects everything from the ideology of armed groups to the delivery of public services.

For example, *Uniting for Peace* analyzes links between demographic change and conflict propensity and notes the high proportion of youth in the populations of conflict-affected and fragile states. It warns that high unemployment among young people is associated with elevated levels of radicalization and violence. Yet the report does not interrogate the gender dynamics driving these demographic shifts. Policy responses should acknowledge the link between steep gender inequalities and the misogyny exhibited by some extremist groups, and incorporate women's empowerment into long-term conflict prevention efforts.

## WHILE MORE FEMALE STAFF WOULD NOT NECESSARILY MAKE MISSION PRACTICE MORE GENDER-RESPONSIVE, THEIR VISIBILITY AND SENIORITY IS SIGNIFICANT BECAUSE IT SIGNALS TO ALL LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS THE SINCERITY OF THE UN'S COMMITMENT TO GENDER EQUALITY.

Apart from the imperatives of preventing (and prosecuting) war crimes against women and increasing their numbers in UN mission staff, many UN member states and senior UN officials lack an understanding of what needs to be done to promote women's participation in peace and security processes. Reflecting these uncertainties, Uniting for Peace proposes no concrete accountability mechanisms to remedy the exclusion of women from peace talks or from post-conflict planning processes. Instead, as has been the case for years, UN leaders are urged to consult – on a 'structured, regular' basis – with women's civil society groups. There are no specifics about what constitutes 'structured' or 'regular,' and no indication of how to hold officials accountable if they fail to hold consultations or to respond constructively to women's concerns and proposals.

One of the structural obstacles to women's peace leadership is that women's groups, decimated by conflict, can be nearly invisible in national politics. Uniting for Peace fails to mention the need to rectify this state of affairs through core funding to women's organizations. Nor does it mention the resource that matters almost as much as cash: information about upcoming peace and security processes, and a direct invitation to engage in them. A more robust approach would be to mandate routine participation of women's organizations in peace talks – even if only as observers – and in donor conferences.

Uniting for Peace does express concern about the low proportion (roughly 20%) of women among mission managers. It recommends a review of the factors that have held back progress in this area. While more female staff would not necessarily make mission practice more gender-responsive, their visibility and seniority is significant because it signals to all local stakeholders the sincerity of the UN's commitment to gender equality. Increasing the proportion of women in senior field positions will require reforms to address serious constraints in their recruitment and retention. So will increasing the proportion of female uniformed peacekeepers. A tantalizing half sentence in the report states that Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) could be offered incentives such as reimbursement premiums for supplying more women soldiers and police. This, however, was not stated explicitly in the report's recommendations.

There is also no mention of another potentially fruitful area for reform: increasing the share of women among locally recruited civilian staff in UN missions, such as drivers, secretaries, translators, and policy analysts. Women hold an average of 17% of these jobs. Recruiting more women would require affirmative-action policies and perhaps skills-building, but would send a strong message about the priority of gender equality in the UN's approach to preventing and resolving conflict. It would also help make the UN more approachable for local women, supporting the push for more sustained and substantive consultation.

*Uniting for Peace* gives welcome attention to the issue of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) by uniformed and civilian UN personnel. But the recommendations differ little from current practice, except for two changes. First, a 'naming and shaming' approach is proposed to call out TCCs that fail to investigate allegations and punish perpetrators.  This will help to signal the sincerity of the UN's zero tolerance policy.  Second, the report recognizes that victims of SEA need support and compensation – but, strangely, the UN trust fund it proposes would not be used to award compensation to victims. Instead, it would pay for prevention and awareness-raising activities. The already acute awareness of high levels of SEA suggests that a lack of local knowledge is not the key problem. Secure and reliable reporting mechanisms that do not put victims at risk are a shortcoming for which the report does not suggest a remedy.

It might be expected that gender issues would find a more central place in The Challenge of Sustaining Peace, the Report of the Advisory Group of Experts for the 2015 Review of the UN's Peacebuilding Architecture. Peacebuilding – the effort to prevent the outbreak or recurrence of armed conflict – extends more naturally into 'development' work, a field in which the promotion of women's rights is more deeply entrenched. Sustaining Peace does call for renewed efforts by the UN and other international actors to involve women's organizations in conflict-prevention, and to ensure their full engagement in economic reconstruction.

That every element of "sustaining peace," from security sector reform to administrative restructuring, has a gender dimension is never in doubt. The panel even acknowledges that 15 years of rhetoric about involving women in peacebuilding "have yet to translate into sufficient material changes in women's lives, or even in the UN's peacemaking and peacebuilding processes" (78). Unfortunately, Sustaining Peace provides very little analysis of the causes of continued under-performance. On some issues, there is no recognition that a problem exists at all. While noting that "electoral reforms can … introduce quotas to increase [women's] representation in elected bodies at all levels"," (79), the report is silent on whether the UN is doing all it can to ensure that quota-based systems are adopted in countries where women are chronically under-represented in politics. Consequently, the report proposes no reforms – not even a requirement of more concerted political pressure from UN officials – to ensure that promoting gender quotas is an integral component of UN electoral assistance.

As for financing, Sustaining Peace refers to the commitment, in the Secretary-General's 2010 7-Point Action Plan on Gender-Responsive Peacebuilding, to spend at least 15% of resources in peacebuilding contexts on projects that promote gender equality or women's empowerment. To its credit, the report acknowledges that, with the partial exception of the Peacebuilding Fund, the 15% pledge has gone largely unfulfilled. There is no explanation for why this might be the case, though the report's recommendation for how to improve this glaring failure implies that a lack of management incentives is at the root of the problem. It suggests that achieving the 15% pledge "be written into the Secretary-General's performance compacts with senior UN leaders on the ground, in mission and non-mission settings, and backed up with an enhanced system for monitoring and tracking achievement" (182).

If adopted in concert with one of the report's key overall recommendations – that all UN agencies operating in Security Council-authorized missions be placed under a single leader, such as an Executive Representative of the Secretary-General – this could introduce the incentives that to date have been lacking. Making senior field managers specifically accountable for achieving the 15% spending commitment would in effect reverse the exemption from this pledge that DPA and DPKO negotiated for themselves five years ago. It would also make the 15% commitment applicable at the country (rather than the global) level, a change that might further enhance accountability.

## POLICY RESPONSES SHOULD ACKNOWLEDGE THE LINK BETWEEN STEEP GENDER INEQUALITIES AND THE MISOGYNY EXHIBITED BY SOME EXTREMIST GROUPS, AND INCORPORATE WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT INTO LONG-TERM CONFLICT PREVENTION EFFORTS.

Sustaining Peace's recommended reforms to the management of UN field operations might also have included, but did not, institutional changes to elevate the status of gender issues within UN mission planning and operations. To date, gender advisors are sometimes, though not always, deployed. They are often isolated from senior mission management and from the priority technical functions of missions. This issue is addressed in Uniting for Peace, which recommends integration of gender experts to all functional components of missions, as well as the placement of a senior gender advisor in the office of the mission leader. This would be a major improvement, but only if recruitment guidelines, terms of reference, and reporting lines are carefully designed to ensure collaboration with UN Women.

Both reports reference the potential role that UN Women could play in a revised mission architecture, but remain vague about how this might work. Uniting for Peace states that 'Missions should have full access to the policy, substantive and technical support from UN Women' (243, 3). Sustaining Peace issues a bland call for DPA and DPKO to "actively explore enhanced ways to work in partnership" with UN Women and other relevant UN agencies (159). The absence of details (or a timeline) for this enhanced collaboration allows the two departments with the most decision-making authority in peacebuilding contexts – departments whose power would be enhanced if field leadership is consolidated, as Sustaining Peace recommends – to avoid institutionalizing sustained attention to gender issues.

In fact, the only other concrete gender-equality proposal in Sustaining Peace concerns UN entities that DPKO and DPA can safely ignore: the intergovernmental Peacebuilding Commission and the secretariat-based Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO), which supports the PBC. Sustaining Peace urges the PBSO to "work closely" with the rest of the UN system (including DPA and DPKO) "to ensure that gender expertise is available" to the PBC as it develops peacebuilding plans with the countries on its agenda (183). The PBC is also encouraged to engage with women's organizations as it develops these plans and monitors their implementation (185). Neither measure would influence decision-making at any level, least of all among senior management in the field.

Both Uniting for Peace and Sustaining Peace state that implementation of the UN Security Council's seven resolutions on women, peace and security must improve. The element of these resolutions that has seen the most focused and sustained action is conflict-related sexual violence, which is an international crime. The promotion of women's leadership and participation in conflict-resolution, peacemaking and post-conflict recovery does not have the same legal status. Implementation instructions, whether from the Security Council or from within the UN system, typically take the weakest possible form, e.g. "encouraging engagement with women's organizations." There are no consequences for failure. These two reports have continued this pattern.

One more major review of the UN's peace and security work is due this coming October: the "**Global Study** on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security," managed by UN Women. It is a crucial opportunity for the UN to recommend bold accountability reforms, without which its longstanding commitments will continue to remain unfulfilled.

*Anne Marie Goetz is a Clinical Professor at the Center for Global Affairs, New York University Center for Global Affairs, New York University. | Twitter: @amgoetz*

*Robert Jenkins is in the Department of Political Science, Hunter College, City University of New York.*

©UN

# THE PRACTICAL IS THE POLITICAL:  THE UN'S GLOBAL STUDY ON WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY

by Rob Jenkins

**ARCHITECTURAL ELEGANCE, CONCEPTUAL CONSISTENCY, AND ECONOMY OF EXPRESSION ARE THE WRONG YARDSTICKS BY WHICH TO MEASURE A REPORT SUCH AS THIS. FAR MORE CONSEQUENTIAL IS WHETHER ITS RECOMMENDATIONS ARE SUFFICIENTLY CONCRETE, AND BOUGHT INTO WIDELY ENOUGH, TO STAND A DECENT CHANCE OF REAL-WORLD ADOPTION.**

Weighing in at just under five pounds, the 417-page *Global Study on the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325*, released last month, is nothing if not ambitious. Its expansive subtitle – "Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing Peace" – correctly hints at the study's broad thematic scope. Just recapitulating, classifying, and mapping the dozens of recommendations spread throughout the report's thirteen main chapters required a 20-page annex, which despite the best of intentions is anything but reader-friendly.

This presentational confusion is symptomatic of deeper structural shortcomings in how the *Global Study* was conceived. The report's outline lacks a clear organizing principle. The rationale for the definition of chapter topics, and their sequencing, is not obvious. There is considerable repetition. Some sections – Chapter 8 on conflict-prevention, for instance – are substantively thin. Others are overstuffed: Chapter 10 (on 'Actors') is three times the length of most others.  As a result, clarity suffers.

But architectural elegance, conceptual consistency, and economy of expression are the wrong yardsticks by which to measure a report such as this. Far more consequential is whether its recommendations are sufficiently concrete, and bought into widely enough, to stand a decent chance of real-world adoption. In this respect, the **Global Study** is already a resounding success: some of its key recommendations were incorporated into a Security Council resolution (**UNSCR 2242**) the day before the report itself was launched. Other proposals emerging from the study will be the subject of high-level internal UN deliberations in the weeks and months ahead. To cite these practical implications is not to damn the report's analytical quality with faint praise. Both the issues and reform proposals in, for example, Chapter 6 (on peacekeeping) are closely argued, and the study's ability to combine internal UN information with the findings of social-science research is impressive.

The institutional and policy reforms proposed in the **Global Study** are directed at the usual range of stakeholders – UN departments and agencies, aid donors, member states in general, the Security Council, civil society organizations, the media – and cover everything from increasing women's political participation in post-conflict countries to addressing gender-discrimination within traditional justice mechanisms. The broad canvas is altogether fitting given that the report was tasked with reviewing a decade and a half of progress on advancing the objectives of **Resolution 1325** since its passage in 2000, including efforts to implement the many "women, peace and security" (WPS) resolutions adopted in the intervening years. Broad-spectrum coverage is also strategic: addressing a wider range of subjects and conceptual framings provides opportunities for a more diverse array of WPS advocates within and outside the UN to advance their specific agendas, whether these involve the rights of women refugees (Chapter 12) or reforms to how humanitarian services are delivered (Chapter 4).

## STAYING IN STEP

The **Global Study's** thinking and recommendations align fairly closely with the gender-related elements of the two other major UN peace and security reviews released this year: *Uniting our Strengths for Peace*, the **Report of the Secretary-General's High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO)**, and *The Challenge of Sustaining Peace*, the Report of the Advisory Group of Experts for the 2015 Review of the UN's Peacebuilding Architecture. The consistency across these three reports is no coincidence. All three were subjected to similar inter-agency consultations within the UN system. Because this largely involved the same UN staff members from one report to the next – the **Global Study's** lead author was also a member of HIPPO – a concerted effort at "coordinated messaging" was a prominent feature of the process by which the three documents were produced. In fact, it would have been surprising if the reports, all released within a 90-day period, had come to blatantly contradictory conclusions. These are, for the most part, consensus documents, and the balance of power among the key peace and security stakeholders – within the UN system as well as among member states – varies little from one month to the next.

Still, because it focuses on gender issues, the **Global Study**, which was requested by the Security Council in Resolution 2122 (2013), goes well beyond what could reasonably be covered in the two earlier reports. The willingness to outline a more far-reaching agenda was also a reflection of the *Global Study*'s organizational locus: while *Uniting for Peace* was coordinated by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), and the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) oversaw the drafting of *Sustaining Peace,* the **Global Study** was conducted under the auspices of UN Women. The study's lead author, Radhika Coomaraswamy, formerly the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict, not only knows the UN system well, but was well known within the system as someone willing to confront powerful actors that sought to obstruct her office's ability to fulfill its mandate. This independent streak may help to account for the report's willingness to stake out new ground.

Much of the analysis underlying the **Global Study** will be familiar to people who have followed the evolution of the WPS agenda. It reports, with updated statistics, on the still pitifully low proportion of women among negotiating delegations to peace talks; the continued lack of funding dedicated to advancing gender equality and meeting women's needs in post-conflict situations; and the difficulties that women's organizations in conflict-affected countries face when seeking access to international forums. These points are supported by a nicely curated selection of academic research, as well as the findings from a series of regional consultations organized to inform the **Global Study**.

One of the key messages that emerged from these consultations was the urgent need among local women peacebuilders in civil society for rapidly disbursing financial assistance to help them play the kind of active and sustained role envisioned for them in **Resolution 1325**. As a result, the *Global Study* recommended that a specialized financing instrument be created for this purpose. The UN system and some donor governments have already begun taking action on this proposal. Even if the idea of establishing a dedicated funding window for women's peace organizations has been circulating for years, there is nothing like a high-profile public manifesto to galvanize action.

## PULLING PUNCHES

For all its merits, the **Global Study's** drafting team had to operate within institutional limits. Pressures from within the UN bureaucracy, particularly from the lead departments responsible for peace and security, effectively constrained the nature and the depth of self-examination the report could undertake. For instance, the report seeks to balance the bad news about women's continued underrepresentation in the mediation field by celebrating, in a standalone box (p. 275), the appointment of Mary Robinson (a former president of Ireland and one-time UN High Commissioner for Human Rights) as the Secretary-General's representative to the Great Lakes Region – ostensibly the first woman to be appointed a lead peace envoy by the UN. What the report avoids mentioning is that this post does not involve mediating an ongoing conflict, but rather facilitating the adoption of new guidelines and protocols in support of an existing conflict-prevention framework. This is not unimportant work, and Robinson has achievements to point to, but a more honest accounting of her appointment would have acknowledged that the UN has still, to date, never appointed a woman as a chief mediator.

One also gets the impression that the data behind some of the study's charts and graphs has been carefully massaged to cast the UN – or parts of it, anyway – in a more flattering light. For instance, rather than reporting straightforwardly on the share of women among senior managers in UN peace operations, which would mean looking at the "director" level and above, a graph on page 271 depicts something slightly different: the proportion of women in a managerial bracket specifically devised to include more junior positions and exclude some that are higher up. This appears to show steady, if excruciatingly slow, progress in recent years. But inquiring minds might suspect that the trend would reflect less well on the UN had a less artful system of classification been used.

The **Global Study** also ignores uncomfortable questions that might generate a productive conversation about the reasons why the WPS agenda has progressed more quickly in some places than in others. For instance, the report might have asked why certain peace processes conducted outside the Security Council's purview – those that do not constitute a standing item on the Council's agenda – have arguably performed better than most UN-run mediation efforts when it comes to implementing at least some of **Resolution 1325's** four pillars of prevention, protection, participation, and relief and recovery.

Take the example of the long-running civil war in Colombia, which was not subjected to continuous Security Council monitoring and was not the site of a UN diplomatic or security mission. Yet, the amount of activity undertaken to advance women's leadership in conflict-resolution processes in Colombia is striking. In 2014, a "subcommision on gender," consisting of representatives from both parties to the conflict, was established to inform the ongoing talks between the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the Colombian government. This built on earlier efforts to ensure women's engagement (and the representation of gender issues) in peace negotiations.

By contrast, UN-administered processes typically do not achieve anything like Colombian levels of gender-responsive peacebuilding with respect to quotas for women in public institutions or other elements of the participation pillar. This may partly reflect Colombia's middle-income status, the strength of its women's movement, and even the support provided by UN Women (which gets a self-congratulatory shout out on page 46). Yet, it's fair to say that if the *Global Study* had not been drafted by the UN, it might have taken greater pains to address the crucial unanswered question in this study, and on which *Uniting for Peace* and *Sustaining Peace* were equally silent: why has the UN been so stunningly incapable of taking even the procedural steps it prescribes for itself, to say nothing of achieving its desired outcomes? Examples of non-implementation are (sometimes) identified in the *Global Study*, but the reasons behind such lapses are rarely if ever confronted honestly. In particular, the political struggles underlying non-implementation – within the UN system and among member states – are left almost completely unexplored.

## THE *GLOBAL STUDY* ALSO IGNORES UNCOMFORTABLE QUESTIONS THAT MIGHT GENERATE A PRODUCTIVE CONVERSATION ABOUT THE REASONS WHY THE WPS AGENDA HAS PROGRESSED MORE QUICKLY IN SOME PLACES THAN IN OTHERS.

The "Financing of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda" (the subject of Chapter 13) is a good example. The reader learns, through a wealth of data, that no standardized system for measuring gender-equality-focused spending in conflict-affected countries is in use across the UN system, nor is there a consistently rigorous channel through which UN entities report the gender-disaggregated spending data that they do generate. But no serious effort is then made to get to the bottom of why these problems have persisted. The report does not, for instance, examine the incentive for entities to reduce exposure to criticism about their under-spending on women's post-conflict priorities. Nor does the *Global Study* adequately explain the UN system's failure to reach even the modest spending target specified in the Secretary-General's 2010 Seven-Point Action Plan on Gender-Responsive Peacebuilding: that 15% of post-conflict project funding be geared toward addressing gender-equality. (The Secretary-General's Policy Committee agreed in late 2010 that this target would be reached by 2014.) Instead, the *Global Study* calls for applying the same (as yet unmet) 15% target more broadly – that is, to all peace and security spending "across the board", including in UN missions and by member-states. In light of past experience, it is unclear why anyone should take these new pledges more seriously.

## STRUCTURAL REFORMS

The *Global Study* rightly notes that fully implementing **Resolution 1325** has been, and will remain, a matter for all actors – national and international, state and non-state. At the same time, it is perhaps inevitable that the most significant recommendations of a UN report will be targeted at the UN itself. Indeed, the *Global Study* proposes a number of structural changes to the UN's WPS architecture. Three are particularly noteworthy.

**The first structural change** is a call to establish a Security Council working group to focus attention on the gender dimensions of the Council's thematic agenda items (on the rule of law, the protection of civilians, etc.) and its country-specific work. The purpose is, among other things, to ensure that when the Council drafts mandates for the peace operations it authorizes, members have access to detailed information on country-specific gender issues across a range of functional domains such as transitional justice and security sector reform. To support its recommendation for a working group, the *Global Study* cites research conducted by several civil-society organizations, including the NGO Working Group on Women Peace and Security. These studies have documented the Security Council's uneven performance when it comes to providing detailed instructions to mission leadership on how to advance women's 'participation,' whether in peace talks, post-conflict planning or constitutional reform processes. This is in contrast to the often very detailed provisions the Council uses on 'protection' issues, particularly those related to conflict-related sexual violence, in its country-specific resolutions.

In Operational Paragraph 5 of **Security Council Resolution 2242**, passed on 13 October, the Council announced its intention to set up an "informal experts group," more or less along the lines suggested in the *Global Study*. This is an idea that some Council members had resisted for years, and for which the Russian delegation continued to express a decided lack of enthusiasm even as it voted in favor of the resolution. (Resolution 2242 was passed on the day of the Council's annual Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security, which in this 15th anniversary year of **Resolution 1325** featured a record number of countries making statements in a marathon session that attracted significant media interest.)

Whether this informal expert group will become a lively part of the Security Council's regular calendar – as is the case with the protection of civilians working group, for instance – is hard to say. The commitment of key member-states will be a major determinant, as will the skill with which the group's working methods are designed.  The recommendation that the group be co-chaired by one permanent member and one elected (i.e., fixed-term) member is a good start. An important constraint is the lack of a robust system for delivering policy-relevant information on country-specific gender issues to the Council in a timely and actionable form. This could be remedied by seriously strengthening UN Women's field offices, which currently lack analytical capacity. The odds of securing new donor funding for such a purpose appear low at present.

**The second structural reform** concerns the architecture of UN field missions. The *Global Study* proposed that a senior gender advisor at the director level be assigned to advise each mission's SRSG on everything from electoral systems and administration to the role of women in post-conflict economic recovery. Gender advisors of various kinds have been deployed to UN missions and country teams in conflict-affected countries for more than a decade, but they are often relegated to marginal activities. Even those with sector-specific expertise have been generally unable to ensure that mission leadership is continuously apprised of the gender dimensions of key issues, let alone influence decision-making.

The appointment of gender advisers is another proposal the Security Council adopted without delay. Operational Paragraph 7 of Resolution 2242 endorses the idea of the Secretary-General deploying senior gender advisors, which is as good an interim outcome as the *Global Study*'s authors could have hoped for. On the other hand, the ability of these advisers to shape policy or the design of decision-making bodies may well depend on what kinds of skills are prioritized in recruitment, which part of the UN assigns them to missions, and (most importantly) the entity to which they report. As of now, it seems that the gender advisors – which the UN system could well take years to deploy widely – will lack the quasi-independence enjoyed by human rights components within UN field missions. This will affect the quality of the advice rendered as well as the receptivity of mission leaders to its content.

**The** *Global Study***'s third major proposal** is for the creation of a new high-level position in UN Women: an Assistant Secretary-General (ASG) for Women, Peace and Security. The new ASG would be charged with championing the WPS agenda, and representing UN Women at interagency forums and before intergovernmental bodies, including but not limited to the Security Council. The idea of a high-level official who could exert pressure on other parts of the UN system to live up to their commitments has a certain appeal. The case for a new leadership figure would be more convincing, however, if a truly independent office – outside the normal bureaucratic chain of command – were to be established. This was not to be. The report argues, cogently if not persuasively, that the nature of the issues do not lend themselves to the creation of a post along the lines of the SRSG on Sexual Violence in Conflict. That office has considerable latitude to speak out and exert pressure, including through its work with Security Council sanctions committees. Whether member-states, not to mention the UN's senior management, will ultimately back the idea of a new ASG is hard to predict. (This is not a decision that can be made through a Security Council resolution.) But there does not seem to be a groundswell of support.

Even if this recommendation is not adopted, the *Global Study* will have achieved a great deal. In addition to the structural reform proposals mentioned here (and there are many others), the report establishes principles to inform what appear likely to be growth areas in the peace and security field. Perhaps most notably, the report (in Chapter 9) argues forcefully against incorporating the work of local women peacebuilders into the kind of soft, but still militarily driven, counter-terrorism strategies found in the emerging international agenda on "countering violent extremism." This emphasis on strategic detachment – which aims to avoid "instrumentalizing" the women's empowerment agenda and tarnishing the reputation of WPS advocates through association with military actors – could, in theory, risk distancing gender equality advocates from high-level security-planning forums. That would be an ironic outcome, given the years invested in securing women's participation in precisely such bodies.

A similar risk arises from another of the report's notable preoccupations: its insistence (in Chapter 12) on identifying the links between WPS objectives and the legal and institutional foundations of international human rights. Could not these arguments also be used to support the claim – a favorite among WPS skeptics – that issues of women's participation are a matter for the UN's human rights bodies, and not a fit subject for the Security Council's continued attention? The willingness of the *Global Study*'s architects to hazard such risks reflects a sense that securing practical, political gains need not come at the expense of principles.

*Rob Jenkins is a professor of political science at Hunter College and the Graduate Center, City University of New York, and the author of Peacebuilding: From Concept to Commission (Routledge, 2013).*

© UN PHOTO/RICK BAJORNAS | SUSAN MALCORRA (LEFT), OUTGOING CHEF DE CABINET TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, PAYS A FAREWELL CALL ON SECRETARY-GENERAL BAN KI-MOON ON 25 NOVEMBER 2015. OF THE SIX FEMALE USG'S WHO RETIRED THIS YEAR, ALL WERE REPLACED BY MEN.

# THE LOST AGENDA: GENDER PARITY IN SENIOR UN APPOINTMENTS

by Karin Landgren

**CUMULATIVELY, ACROSS THE 59 USG AND ASG APPOINTMENTS, 83 PER CENT WERE MEN. IT IS ESPECIALLY STRIKING THAT OF THE 23 EU NATIONALS APPOINTED TO TOP-LEVEL UN POSTS THIS YEAR, ALL BUT ONE WERE MEN. FIVE WERE BRITISH MEN. AMONG AFRICAN NATIONALS APPOINTED, WOMEN MADE UP OVER ONE-QUARTER.**

As the clamour grows for a woman to be chosen as the next Secretary-General, other **high-level staff appointments** have been quietly but steadily defying the UN's longstanding goal of gender parity. Seemingly unnoticed, this year's selections for the seniormost level of UN staff have skewed nearly 92 per cent male. Between 1 January and 10 December 2015, 22 men and only two women were appointed as UN undersecretaries-general, **according to public sources**.

The rhetoric of UN achievements has overshadowed the reality. And the reality can be surprisingly hard to verify. A list of senior officials indicates that the UN designates some **80-plus persons worldwide as undersecretaries-general (USGs), and over 100 as assistant secretaries-general (ASGs)**.

Almost twenty years ago, **the UN made a commitment to achieving gender parity in managerial and decision-making roles** by the year 2000. This target having been missed, subsequent resolutions aimed for parity in "the very near future", except for the category of Secretary-General's Special Representatives and Special Envoys, **which was to be gender-balanced by 2015**.

Two recent developments in gender equality are worth noting. In October, the Global Study on UNSC resolution 1325 made the case for the UN to do a better job of including women in its core business, the field of peace and security. And last month, Canada's new Prime Minister Justin Trudeau showed leadership in announcing a cabinet with equal numbers of men and women. "Because it's 2015," said Trudeau.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon often mentions that he has appointed more women to senior UN positions than ever before, saying, "**You need to have political will**." Four years ago, he told a gathering that the UN's top humanitarian official, high commissioner for human rights, head of management, top lawyer, and "**even our top cop, are all women**." Today, they are all men. At that moment, too, the largest-ever number of women - "five and counting" - were leading UN peacekeeping missions. The same is true today: women head five out of sixteen UN peacekeeping missions.

This year also saw six women undersecretaries-general replaced by men, further undercutting the goal of building female leadership within the UN. The first female USG of the year was appointed only in October.

At the next level down – assistant secretaries-general, or ASGs – male appointments made up 77 per cent. Cumulatively, across the 59 USG and ASG appointments, 83 per cent were men. It is especially striking that of the 23 EU nationals appointed to top-level UN posts this year, all but one were men. Five were British men. Among African nationals appointed, women made up over one-quarter.

Nearly two decades ago, the General Assembly pointed out the importance of the Secretary-General's "visible commitment" to achieving the targets of women's participation in the UN. The dominance of male senior appointments this year calls into question Ban's commitment to gender parity at the top of the UN, so evident earlier in his tenure, and leaves in tatters what was shaping up to be a solid legacy.

Information on senior appointments can be patchy. Often, press releases omit the grade level, and do not distinguish decision-making positions from those that are part-time and largely unremunerated (and which are excluded from this review). Moreover, the UN can give the impression of massaging the data to show the appointment of senior women in a more flattering light, according to Professor Rob Jenkins, who cites a graph on senior managers in UN peace operations showcasing women "**in a managerial bracket specifically devised to include more junior positions and exclude some that are higher up**."

Several measures are needed. The first step is greater transparency around senior appointments. The UN should promptly set up an open database covering full-time, paid appointments at the most senior levels, making it easier to monitor benchmarks towards gender equality.

Second, governments themselves need to demonstrate stronger commitment to gender equality in the UN. Although UN staff are required to maintain independence from their governments, **some governments lobby hard to have their citizens selected for senior UN posts**. While proposals for good candidates, from any source, can be entertained, the impact on gender parity should be a stronger consideration.

Finally, to insulate the Secretary General more effectively from external pressures, the UN should set up a merit-based appointments mechanism for senior levels, as recommended by the recent **High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations**. More effort also needs to go into head-hunting great female candidates, as Kofi Annan did in naming former Irish President Mary Robinson to serve as the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

The biggest lesson of 2015 is how quickly gains turn to losses, without the dedicated attention of a gender-sensitive UN leadership – and how untroubled the UN and member states appear to be. The level of structural non-compliance facing the gender parity agenda won't be fixed simply by choosing a female Secretary-General.  Years of General Assembly resolutions mean that this task is already in the job description of the next office-holder.  Ending the gender disparity in top appointments would be a good place to start.

*Karin Landgren is a non-resident visiting fellow at the Center on International Cooperation at NYU.  | Twitter: @LandgrenKarin*

## SEE INFOGRAPHICS AND A TABLE OF APPOINTMENTS ON PAGE 94-99

## 2015 UN SENIOR APPOINTMENTS BY GENDER
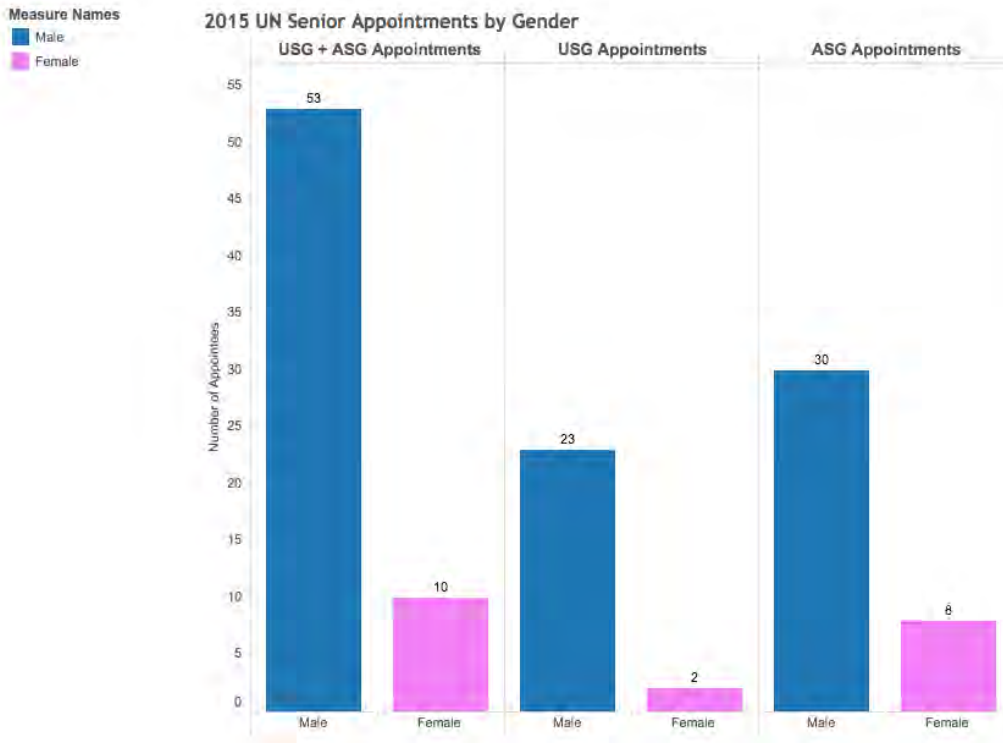


## 2015 USG & ASG APPOINTMENTS BY NATIONALITY | # OVER COUNTRY DENOTES # OF APPOINTEES
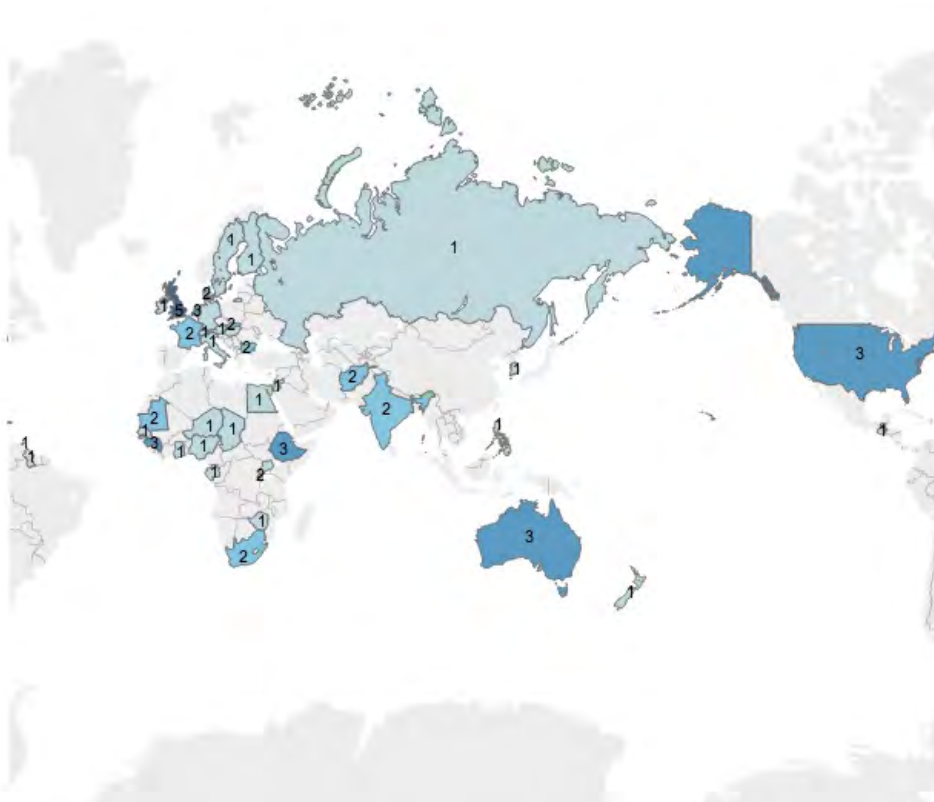
## USG AND ASG APPOINTMENTS BY MONTH, WITH CUMULATIVE NUMBERS:

| Appointment # | USG | ASG | Male | Female |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **January 2015 - 4 male, 0 female.  USG 1M, ASG 3M** | | | | |
| 1 | ♂ | | Atul Khare (India), USG : Department for Field Support | |
| 2 | | ♂ | Joakim Reiter (Sweden), ASG UNCTAD | |
| 3 | | ♂ | Janos Pasztor (Hungary), ASG Climate Change | |
| 4 | | ♂ | Haile Tilahun Gebremarian (Ethiopia), ASG, Head of Mission, UN Interim Security Force Abyei (UNISFA) [military] | |
| **February 2015 - (cumulative numbers)  9 male, 1 female.  USG 3M, ASG 6M 1F** | | | | |
| 5 | ♂ | | Nickolay Mladenov (Bulgaria), USG, Special Coordinator, Middle East Peace Process | |
| 6 | | ♀ | | Bintou Keita (Guinea), ASG, Ebola Crisis Manager, Sierra Leone |
| 7 | | ♂ | David Gressly (USA), ASG, DSRSG MONUSCO | |
| 8 | | ♂ | George Okoth-Obbo (Uganda), ASG, Assistant High Commissioner for Operations UNHCR | |
| 9 | | ♂ | Volker Türk (Austria), ASG, Assistant High Commissioner for Protection UNHCR | |
| 10 | ♂ | | Jan Kubis (Slovakia), USG, SRSG UNAMI | |
| **March 2015:  14 male, 1 female.  USG 4M, ASG 10M 1F** | | | | |
| 11 | | ♂ | Yannick Glemarec (France), ASG UNWomen | |
| 12 | ♂ | | Stephen O'Brien (UK), USG for Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) | |
| 13 | | ♂ | Miroslav Jenca (Slovakia), ASG for Political Affairs (DPA) | |
| 14 | | ♂ | Petko Draganov (Bulgaria), ASG, SRSG and head of UN Centre for Preventive Diplomacy, Central Asia (UNRCCA) | |

| Appointment # | USG | ASG | Male | Female |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 15 | | ♂ | Michael Lollesgaard (Denmark), ASG, Force Commander MINUSMA [military] | |
| April 2015:  19 male, 1 female.  USG 6M, ASG 13M 1F | | | | |
| 16 | | ♂ | Elliott Harris (Trinidad and Tobago), ASG, UNEP | |
| 17 | | ♂ | Philippe Lazzarini (Switzerland), ASG, Deputy Special Coordinator, Lebanon | |
| 18 | ♂ | | Peter Graaff (Netherlands), USG, Acting Head of UNMEER | |
| 19 | | ♂ | Ali Al-Za'atari (Jordan), ASG, Deputy SRSG UNSMIL | |
| 20 | ♂ | | Ismael Ould Sheikh Ahmed (Mauritania), USG, Special Envoy for Yemen | |
| May 2015:   24 male, 2 female.  USG 6M, ASG 18M 2F | | | | |
| 21 | | ♂ | Robert Piper (Australia), ASG, Deputy Special Coordinator Middle East Peace Process | |
| 22 | | ♂ | Mourad Wahba (Egypt), ASG, DSRSG, MINUSTAH | |
| 23 | | ♀ | | Mbaranga Gasarabwe (Rwanda), ASG, DSRSG, MINUSMA |
| 24 | | ♂ | Toby Lanzer (UK), ASG, OCHA Regional Humanitarian Coordinator (Sahel) | |
| 25 | | ♂ | Mamadou Diallo (Guinea), ASG, DSRSG, MONUSCO | |
| 26 | | ♂ | Eugene Owusu (Ghana), ASG, DSRSG, UNMISS | |
| June 2015:  28 male, 4 female.  USG 9M, ASG 19M 4F | | | | |
| 27 | | ♀ | | Kelly T Clements (USA), ASG, Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees |
| 28 | | ♀ | | Fatoumata Ndiaye (Senegal), ASG, Deputy Executive Director, UNICEF |

| Appointment # | USG | ASG | Male | Female |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 29 | | ♂ | Nikhil Seth (India), ASG, Executive Director UNITAR | |
| 30 | ♂ | | Tegegnework Gettu (Ethiopia), USG, Coordinator for Multilingualism | |
| 31 | ♂ | | Michael Møller (Denmark), USG, Director-General, UNOG | |
| 32 | ♂ | | Kim Won-soo (Republic of Korea), USG, Acting High Representative for Disarmament Affairs | |
| July 2015:  30 male, 4 female.  USG 9M, ASG 21M, 4F | | | | |
| 33 | | ♂ | Peter de Clercq (Netherlands), ASG, DSRSG UNISOM | |
| 34 | | ♂ | Arthur David Gawn (NZ), ASG, Head of Mission, UNTSO [military] | |
| August 2015: 35 male, 4 female.  USG 13M, ASG 22M, 4F | | | | |
| 35 | ♂ | | Farid Zarif (Afghanistan), USG, SRSG UNMIL | |
| 36 | ♂ | | Parfait Onanga-Anyanga (Gabon), USG, SRSG CAR | |
| 37 | ♂ | | Zahir Tanin (Afghanistan), USG, SRSG UNMIK | |
| 38 | | ♂ | Koen Davidse (Netherlands), ASG, Deputy SRSG MINUSMA | |
| 39 | ♂ | | Jean Arnault (France), USG, Delegate to Sub-Commission on Colombian End of Conflict Issues | |
| September 2015: 35 male, 5 female.  USG 13M, ASG 22M, 5F | | | | |
| 40 | | ♀ | | Fadzai Gwaradzimba (Zimbabwe), ASG DSS |
| October 2015:  38 male, 8 female.  USG 15M, 1F;  ASG 23M, 7F | | | | |
| 41 | ♀ | | | Heidi Mendoza (Philippines), USG, Internal Oversight Services |
| 42 | ♂ | | Maman Sambo Sidikou (Niger), USG, SRSG MONUSCO | |

| Appointment # | USG | ASG | Male | Female |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 43 | | ♀ | | Laura Londén (Finland), ASG, Deputy Executive Director, UNFPA |
| 44 | | ♂ | Waldemar Vrey (South Africa), ASG, DSRSG UNMIL | |
| 45 | ♂ | | Martin Ihoeghian Uhomoibhi (Nigeria), USG, Joint Special Representative, UNAMID | |
| 46 | | ♀ | | Bintou Keita (Guinea), ASG, DSRSG UNAMID (second 2015 appointment: see note) |
| November 2015:  47 male, 9 female.  USG 21M, 2F;  ASG 26M, 7F | | | | |
| 47 | ♂ | | Tegegnework Gettu (Ethiopia), USG, Associate Administrator, UNDP (second 2015 appointment: see note) | |
| 48 | ♂ | | Martin Kobler (Germany), USG, SRSG UNSMIL | |
| 49 | ♂ | | Jamal Benomar (UK), USG, Special Adviser to the SG | |
| 50 | ♂ | | Filippo Grandi (Italy), USG, High Commissioner for Refugees | |
| 51 | | ♂ | Rashid Khalilov (Russian Federation), ASG for Partnerships, OCHA | |
| 52 | ♂ | | Michael Keating (UK), USG, SRSG UNSOM | |
| 53 | | ♂ | Robert Glasser (Australia), ASG, Special Representative for Disaster Risk Reduction | |
| 54 | ♂ | | Edmond Mulet (Guatemala), USG, Chef de Cabinet | |
| 55 | | ♂ | Patrick Carey (Ireland), ASG, Deputy Chef de Cabinet ad interim | |
| 56 | ♀ | | | Catherine Pollard (Guyana), USG for GA and Conference Management |

| Appointment # | USG | ASG | Male | Female |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| December 2015: 53 male, 10 female. [USG 23M, 2F; ASG 30M, 8F] | | | | |
| 57 | | ♀ | | Kate Gilmore (Australia), ASG, Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights |
| 58 | | ♂ | El-Ghassim Wane (Mauritania), ASG, Deputy Head of DPKO | |
| 59 | ♂ | | David Nabarro (UK), USG, Special Adviser, Global Goals | |
| 60 | | ♂ | Frank Mushyo Kamanzi (Rwanda), ASG, Force Commander UNAMID (military) | |
| 61 | | ♂ | Christopher Coleman (USA), ASG, DSRSG UNMIK | |
| 62 | ♂ | | Mahamet Salah Annadif (Chad), USG, SRSG MINUSMA | |
| 63 | | ♂ | Derrick Mbuyiselo Mgwebi (South Africa), ASG, Force Commander, MONUSCO (military) | |

1)Note: the three-month interim appointment of Mark Kroeker (USA), ASG, Deputy SRSG, UNMIL not included in calculation.

2) Note: if the first of two 2015 appointments of Mr T. Gettu and Ms B. Keita are excluded, the figures change marginally, to 92% male USG, 81% male ASG, for 85% overall male appointments.

3) The SG appointed nearly as many senior men in November 2015 - nine - as he did senior women in all of 2015.

# NEW APPROACHES

A MONUSCO UNARMED AERIAL VEHICLE (UAV) IS TAXIING ON GOMA AIRPORT DURING OFFICIAL LAUNCH CEREMONY WITH HERVE LADSOUS, THE 3RD OF DECEMBER 2013. © MONUSCO/SYLVAIN LIECHTI

# NEW TOOLS FOR BLUE HELMETS

by John Karlsrud

**WHILE THE UNITED STATES IS BY FAR THE LARGEST DONOR TO PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS, PAYING FOR 28 PERCENT OF THE BUDGET, IT RANKS 74TH ON THE LIST OF TROOP-CONTRIBUTORS, WITH JUST 82 MILITARY AND POLICE OFFICERS SECONDED TO PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS.**

The United Nations had entered the 21st century", Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Hervé Ladsous told troops at a **2013 ceremony** for the first deployment of observation drones in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In 2014, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon launched an **expert panel review of technology and innovation in peacekeeping**. When it delivered its **report** in February 2015,it advised that missions could "**benefit from ongoing technological innovations in a systematic and integrated manner in the longer term**." The momentum to give peacekeeping some new tools is set to continue with the release of the report from the **UN high-level panel of peace operations**.

Better use of technology can improve peacekeeping at every level of operations. But it is the use of drones and other information-gathering tools that grabs the headlines. Peace operations, including **MONUSCO** in the DRC, have been embarrassed as armed groups have committed atrocities near their compounds. UN contingents need to better know what is going on around them and be able to share that with field commanders and headquarters officials. New technologies have the potential to help protect civilians and deter threats as well as contribute to peace and stability in the longer term.

In the complex political environment of peace operations, these new tools are potential double-edged swords that can exacerbate tensions between northern and southern member states over the direction of UN peacekeeping. Some richer countries have them, while many poorer nations do not. There is a fear that deploying drones will involve spying on host countries. Understandably, local populations are often mistrustful of the UN gathering data and information on their day-to-day lives, especially if they do not know how it is used.

If the UN is to add to its toolkit, there needs to be a more compelling internal and external explanation as to how new technologies benefit mission objectives. There also needs to be clear guidelines for their operational use, along with protocols for protecting the information they gather. The political aspect of their adoption needs to be addressed as much as the tactical innovation of how they will be deployed.

## OPPORTUNITIES

Experiences from a decade of network-centric warfare in Iraq and Afghanistan are also slowly permeating into UN peacekeeping. In the network-centric paradigm, information flows rapidly to individuals on the battlefield. Western countries active in these theatres that contribute to blue helmet missions rotate staff with battlefield experience through permanent missions and UN headquarters in New York. This approach offers radical new potential to plan and execute peace operations, with the aim of enabling the right type and amount of force to be employed at the right level, at the right place and time.

Technology can help to improve situational awareness and better protect at-risk civilians and peacekeeping forces alike. It allows tracking of movement of personnel and capabilities on all levels in real time, providing the precise location of each soldier, vehicle and unit. While it may be impractical to track individual soldiers, the **UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA)** has experimented with **Ushahidi software** to map security incidents in real time.

Visual presentation of information is more intuitive and is often a better tool for decision-makers at tactical, operational and strategic levels than long written reports where patterns are easily missed. Information can be layered according to type and classification, with access to sensitive layers being password protected. UN peace operations have available to them a wide range of sources, including personnel on the ground, local partners and open source material.

Commercial satellite imagery can provide up-to-date images at low cost, enabling missions to monitor evolving situations on the ground. In Darfur, for example, the Satellite Sentinel and Enough projects purchased imagery from DigitalGlobe, whose experts analyzed data in conjunction with volunteer technology communities (VTCs). They **showed** that satellite images could be used to monitor violence on the ground, document human rights violations and provide early warning of impending attacks.

The UN system gathers vast amounts of data on a daily basis and is currently investigating how it can improve data collection for sustainable development. The Secretary-General set up the **Independent Expert Advisory Group on a Data Revolution for Sustainable Development (IEAG)** in 2014. IEAG has since **advised** how the UN can better make global use of new technologies and the data deluge.

UN peace operations could also engage with the volunteer technologists that habitually support NGOs during disasters and in conflict situations such as Libya. Since 2010, thousands of these volunteers have responded to earthquakes in Haiti and Chile and flooding in Pakistan. They have processed large volumes of data and created valuable information by plotting it on maps.

Volunteer networks such as **Crisismappers** are a new class of actors with their own set of advantages and challenges. They can bring a significant mass of intellectual power to bear in a crisis. In **Haiti during the 2010 earthquake**, they were able to fill the information void and turn the country into one of the most accurately mapped places in the world in a matter of hours. As volunteers, they can act much faster than multilateral organizations. But while their intentions are good, they do not always adhere to accepted standards. Umbrella groups coordinating them are seeking to professionalize their activities by establishing **codes of conduct** and **guidelines** to ensure that any unintended negative consequences of their involvement can be avoided.

In the DRC, peacekeepers have handed out mobile phones to the local population as part of an effort to create Community Alert Networks (CANs). These are intended to alert MONUSCO when a potential conflict situation is emerging. The networks can also be used for simple perception surveys, improving the mission's ability to capture, understand and integrate local observations into daily decision-making. The hope is that this can also enhance its ability to protect civilians. Elva, a similar network set up by **Saferworld** and the **Caucasus Research Resource Center** in Georgia, incorporates a **tool to map security incidents** and infrastructure issues, and to request assistance in emergency situations.

For peace operations, social media offers yet another channel to improve engagement with local populations, especially when viewed as a tool of discussion rather than just information. Social media outlets can be invaluable ways to communicate mission objectives, receive feedback on performance, answer queries and address misinformation.

## CHALLENGES

These technologies accentuate the need to update the doctrinal framework guiding UN peace operations to better reflect a changing operational environment. The UN has developed guidelines to better understand local perceptions. **There now follows a critical need for mission leadership to "take full advantage of opportunities to collect systematically and effectively analyse, information on local perceptions to enhance missions' situational awareness, inform confidence building, and support inclusive post-conflict governance."** While this is a good first step, the UN secretariat needs to ensure that these principles are also reflected in the planning and funding of future missions.

The UN is also deploying new systems for gathering information. In Mali, Dutch troops taking part in **MINUSMA** have started making use of signals intelligence (also known as electronic eavesdropping), listening in on telephone conversations of armed groups. Observation drones – or unmanned aerial systems (UAS) in UN parlance – in the DRC have received much attention since their deployment in December 2013. They have found use in operations of the Force Intervention Brigade and the *Forces*

*Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo (FARDC)* against the M23 and *Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda (FDLR)*. They also identified a sinking boat on Lake Kivu and aided the UN mission in rescuing a number of civilians. The **UN's airborne surveillance program** is a first for the organization. It is currently finalizing general and country-specific guidelines for the program's implementation."

Such tools can enable the UN to radically improve its situational awareness. Aerial observation allows large areas to be surveyed for troop and population movements, including at night and in forested terrain. Conflict-affected areas in the DRC are otherwise inaccessible due to the dense jungle and poor infrastructure. UAVs may also improve the security and safety of UN troops and local civilians by ensuring forces are deployed in the right place in situations of emerging violence. Drones could aid in the pursuit of belligerent groups and avoidance of ambushes. **With the right adaptions, they could even scan roads for IEDs**."

The UN considers the deployment of drones in the DRC a success. The capability was being sought for missions in CAR, Mali, and South Sudan and the Central African Republic. In **Mali**, the UN aims to include longer-range UAVs, drawing upon their experience from the DRC."

But not every host country wants UN missions to have aerial surveillance capability, particularly not when a government is engaged in an ongoing conflict. **South Sudan rejected the proposal outright**." After the OSCE deployed two short-range drones to eastern Ukraine, combatants attempted to thwart their use with electronic countermeasures and shoot them down. **Under such conditions, the effective use of drones is limited**."

The use of drones also raises a number of difficult questions: how long should data be stored and who can require access post facto? Can the ICC request the UN to share the data at a later date? Going forward, the UN must address these questions and develop an institutional framework not only at the mission level, but also at the global level."

## SURF, NOT TURF

Adding these new capabilities to UN peace operations risks creating a data deluge. The challenge will be sifting through rapid data streams, analyzing them and producing actionable information in real-time. Managing this without overload will require new ways of decision-making at all levels, and the ability to overcome intra-organizational turf wars. New technology and tools will shift the relationship between the field and UN Headquarters in New York as well as between mission headquarters and staff at the tactical level." (Bandwidth here refers to the amount of data that can be transferred to and from UN peace operations) One good recent example was the establishment of the **UN Operations and Crisis Centre (UNOCC)** in New York.(UNOCC includes the Secretariat organizations as well as the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and the UN Development Programme. Unfortunately the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) chose to remain outside the structure)

Most UN peace operations rely on satellite links to connect the field and headquarters. Access to high-speed optical fibre networks or using local providers is rarely an option. Increased data flows require more bandwidth. If a host country's telecommunications infrastructure is inadequate, the deployment of these tools will require the UN itself to pay for upgraded data transmission capabilities for its own missions.

These new systems require highly qualified technicians to run them. The **Expert Panel on Technology and Innovation in UN Peacekeeping** suggested member states could provide network engineers to set up efficient and secure communication at an early phase of mission deployment. The panel proposed establishing of a mechanism to furnish the UN with technological expertise as Civilian Contributing Countries (CCCs) and Technological expertise contributing countries (TechCCs). This new measure, a practical follow-up to the civilian capacities reform initiative rolled out in **2009**, would parallel existing arrangements for police and troop contributing countries (**PCCs and TCCs**).

Inter-organizational cooperation also needs further strengthening. The integration of operations and crisis centers at the UN in the UNOCC is matched by similar initiatives at the global level. The European Union has taken the initiative by encouraging collaboration between the crisis rooms of, among others, the UN, NATO and OSCE, as well as regional organizations such as the African Union and the **League of Arab States**.  But closer cooperation is needed. Organizations must ensure inter-operability and enable real-time exchange of data to make this collaboration useful to decision-makers. However, concerns about sharing sensitive information remain. The UN is perceived by others to have severe difficulties safeguarding confidential data.

## THE U.N. HAS INCREASINGLY BEEN PREPARED TO USE FORCE TO DEFEND CIVILIANS; IN 2013, THE SECURITY COUNCIL BROKE WITH A TRADITION OF IMPARTIAL PEACEKEEPING BY AUTHORIZING AN "INTERVENTION BRIGADE" TO FIGHT REBELS IN EASTERN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO WHO HAD BEEN MASSACRING VILLAGERS

Increasing convergence between information platforms raises another difficult question: how should UN peace operations cooperate with humanitarian actors? In the humanitarian field, common operational datasets (**CODs**) were developed by NGOs and the UN agencies under the leadership of **OCHA**. CODs ensure that common standards are followed during the collection and storage of information, and enable easy exchange of information between organizations in the **UN system**. UN peace operations have access to this information, and increasing convergence between data platforms allows real-time information sharing and swift decision-making. But humanitarians insist on their neutrality and are wary about sharing more sensitive information with peace operations, especially those with robust mandates. Humanitarian partners are also reluctant to use information gathered by observation drones and other **new technologies**. While OCHA has developed guidance for **humanitarian workers** regarding **drones, UN peace operations** are still lagging behind.

Cooperation with the private sector is increasing, but more can be done. Leaders in information technology, such as Google and Microsoft, can and do help the UN increase its effectiveness in sorting through the vast piles of data it gathers. Military components, Civil Affairs, Human Rights officers and other civilians in the field send written reports up the chain of command each day. How can this information be formatted, quantified, presented and analyzed for longer-term trends? The UN expert panel suggested more military, police and civilian peacekeepers should be equipped with smart phones and tablets to enable real-time and **geo-tagged reporting**.

Data provided by local populations through social media, twitter messages and other forms of communication must be crosschecked in real-time with other sources to ensure validity as well as relevance and possible actionability for decision-makers.

Digital 'exhaust' can be useful to detect macro trends. For example, group geo-tagging of mobile phones can detect population movement, while sudden spikes in remittance transfers can help detect geographical locations where **tension is looming**. Discussions should take place with banking, telecom and remittance industries to determine how they might be able to share their data without compromising business secrets or personal details.

## BEWARE OF TECHNO-HUBRIS

While new technology opens up many possibilities, its use does have skeptics. More information does not automatically lead to better actions to protect civilians or troops. Observation drones and other tools can have a potential deterrent effect on would-be perpetrators by making it clear that they are under surveillance, hopefully raising the bar for committing atrocities.

However, the use of drones in particular must be accompanied by strong public information campaigns. Host populations need to know the rationale for their deployment, and understand the limits of what drones can and cannot do. UN drones are only used for observation, for example. They are not intended to carry offensive weapons. In eastern DRC, the local population has dubbed the drones "**loud mosquitos**" as if they were an unwanted annoyance, rather seeing them as the eyes of a mission sent to protect them.

With collection of personal data and information comes concern about balancing the right to privacy. To increase the accountability and effectiveness of aid, vulnerable and affected populations must often share personal information before receiving support. In the wrong hands, this data could be used against the very people its collection was intended to help.

Satellites can provide detailed images of private property. Tapping phone calls infringes on private conversations. Such information needs to be gathered for a clear purpose, in a regulated and legal way, and stored in a secure manner. Management systems need to be developed with checks and balances to ensure UN peace operations gather this information in a responsible and respectful way. Populations in host countries should not be treated as second-class citizens simply because the legal frameworks protecting their privacy may not be as well developed as in more advanced countries.

After data is gathered, new questions arise concerning where it will be stored, whether it will be secure, and for how long it will be kept. There are also jurisdictional concerns about control, access and redistribution of this information. Can it be obtained by member states, the **International Criminal Court (ICC)**, or NGOs? Is it considered admissible evidence and can it be used in court? Who pays for the long-term data warehousing, archiving and management of information collected from a mission of limited duration? Will it be kept if it reveals UN inaction in the face of blatant violations of international law? The UN, moreover, is not immune from offensive cyber-attacks. The more **sensitive information** it holds, the more likely it will be the target of such intrusions.

## WAY FORWARD

The exit of Western troops from Afghanistan and return to UN peacekeeping could be mutually beneficial, creating new sources of capabilities. The UN can offer Western member states theatres where troops can continue to deploy and maintain their capacities. These peace operations can be an arena for sharing of experiences between traditional and new TCCs. But suspicion persists because "new technologies" is typically thought of as a catchall euphemism for "intelligence gathering."

UN peacekeeping vitally needs new technology far beyond just observation drones. UN missions need community alert networks, partnerships with crisis mappers, and new ways of managing the relationship between the field and headquarters. A strong case must be made that these tools are not just about making missions more robust, but also better informed, more efficient and increasingly connected to the communities with whom they work.

New tools will require new capacities. More highly-trained experts, technicians and decision-makers will be required to implement and operate them, rather than the generalists often sent to missions or staffing headquarters. Mission budgets will need to spend more funds on capital-intensive equipment and satellite bandwidth to make the most out of new systems.

But the push for more technology should do no harm to the populations peace operations are sent to serve. There are legitimate concerns about privacy that will have to be addressed. Legal frameworks, management systems and internal security will need to be reviewed and adjusted to prevent negative and unintended consequences. Many of these new tools offer the promise of building bridges and opening channels of communication with local populations. SMS-messaging and social media feedback gives missions a better understanding of what local populations are thinking, while allowing them to communicate mission priorities. New technologies can help missions achieve political, not just military, objectives.

Implementation of new technological capabilities needs to be less ad hoc, and set more firmly into the doctrinal framework of the UN. These innovative tools provide opportunities for more informed decision making in military, police and civilian components. If used sensibly and sensitively, they offer an opportunity to create people-centred peacekeeping.

*John Karlsrud is a Fulbright Scholar and Visiting Fellow at the Center on International Cooperation at NYU and Senior Research Fellow and Manager, Training for Peace programme, Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI). His latest articles include 'Towards More People-Centric Peace Operations: From 'Extension of State Authority' to 'Strengthening Inclusive State-Society Relations' in Stability, and 'The UN at War: Examining the Consequences of Peace Enforcement Mandates for the UN Peacekeeping Operations in the CAR, the DRC and Mali' in Third World Quarterly. | Twitter: @johnkarlsrud*

POLICE OFFICERS OF THE UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN SOUTH SUDAN (UNMISS) PLAY WITH CHILDREN AT THE TEMPORARY LEARNING SPACE OF THE PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS (POC) SITE 2 IN JUBA. THE OFFICERS ARE MEMBERS OF THE GENDER CHILD AND VULNERABLE PERSONS PROTECTION (GCVPP) UNIT OF UN POLICE (UNPOL) IN THE MISSION. ©UN PHOTO

# HOW CAN THE UN MOVE TOWARDS MORE PEOPLE-CENTERED PEACE OPERATIONS?

by John Karlsrud

**FOR PEACEBUILDING AND PEACEKEEPING EFFORTS TO SUCCEED, HOWEVER, IT IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY TO BUILD MORE INCLUSIVE AND PARTICIPATORY STATES THAT ARE RESPONSIVE AND ACCOUNTABLE TO THEIR PEOPLE.**

A slew of recent reviews, such as the high level panel on UN peace operations report **(HIPPO report)**, the 2015 review of the UN peacebuilding architecture and the **2030 agenda** for sustainable development, have all put people at the front and center of the international community's efforts to bring about peace, security and development. These reports focus on the need for **responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative** political settlements to achieve sustained peace.

This follows increasing criticism that the UN and other international peacebuilders are more focused on placating national elites and their masters at headquarters in New York, Brussels and Washington, rather than the people they are mandated to protect. Séverine Autessere and **other scholars argue** that international peacebuilders are more intent on **following their professional**

**prescripts** than responding to local needs, focusing on tangible outputs such as buildings, institutions, laws and technical assistance, resulting in a **top-down approach**. These critics argue that the UN should instead focus on helping establish more **accountable, inclusive and responsive** states that can respond to the needs and views of the people. These need to be articulated by the people through formal, as well as **informal political institutions**. To really help people and the states they live in, UN peace operations must respond to the challenges facing these **states of fragility** by fostering more inclusive and responsive societies.

## WHAT HAS THE UN BEEN DOING?

The focus on protection of civilians (PoC) has undoubtedly had a positive impact on the willingness and ability of UN peacekeeping to take a more people-centred approach over the last decade or so. However, as Jean Arnault also convincingly **argues**, a spinoff effect is that missions have been mandated to protect civilians in a robust manner, often without a corresponding long-term political strategy. Although the PoC strategy has three pillars, the main focus has been to protect civilians from physical violence, with an emphasis on military capabilities and the willingness to use them (or the lack thereof).

On the positive side, this has also increased attention at UN headquarters to what peace operations do at local levels. For instance, it has led to the inclusion of new capacities to better understand local conflict dynamics and perceptions. One example includes the **community liaison assistants** and the community alert networks first deployed by UN stabilization mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo and now being rolled out in several other missions. Another example is the set of guidelines on **understanding and integrating local perceptions** issued by the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) in 2014. DPKO is currently also working on a set of guidelines for supporting and enhancing state/society relations at the local level.

A third example is the UN peacekeeping mission in South Sudan, UNMISS, which began setting up Country Support Bases before the crisis in 2013. These bases should enable improved state presence and service delivery on the local level. UNMIL in Liberia serves as a fourth example, having set up **Justice and Security Hubs** and **County Security Councils** that increased the presence of national authorities on local levels and facilitated the transition and exit of the peacekeeping mission.

## RESPONDING TO THE NEEDS OF PEOPLE IN CONFLICT

The **HIPPO report** argues for "a renewed resolve on the part of UN peace operations personnel to engage with, serve and protect the people they have been mandated to assist" (p. viii). Conflict-affected countries more often than not also struggle with centre-periphery tensions, along with a self-serving elite that knows how to engage with and influence international actors, but who neither necessarily represent, nor have the best interest of the general population in mind.

The main interlocutor in peacekeeping and peacebuilding is the host state, and states are the primary units of the UN. The focus on strengthening state authority is thus an inbuilt reflex of the system. Host states may thus view efforts to consult more broadly and deeply as infringements on their sovereignty. For peacebuilding and peacekeeping efforts to succeed, however, it is absolutely necessary to build more inclusive and participatory states that are responsive and accountable to their people. In tandem, it is crucial to **build institutions and trust** in those institutions. Missions need to support inclusive politics but also more inclusive economics. As the former Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Liberia, Karin Landgren, convincingly **points out**, there is a need to move away from an enclave economy that only benefits a small elite.

The key tenet of the HIPPO report and the peacebuilding review has been the primacy of politics – and politics that is grounded in the will and needs of the people of conflict-affected countries on national and local levels. As the peacebuilding review points out, the engagement of external peacebuilders − focusing their efforts on building national capacity and extending state authority − can add tension rather than build peace: "in a context of fragmentation, it is possible that an attempt to rebuild or extend central authority could lead not to peace but to deepening conflict" (p. 16).

The Secretary-General's **follow-up report to the HIPPO** argues that the UN should be "more responsive and more accountable to the needs of countries and people in conflict" (p. 3). This was also singled out by the Secretary-General as one of three key priorities at the launch of the report. The follow-up report goes on to deal with expectation management and strategic communications to "foster public support", but this is only part of the picture. To achieve **inclusive political settlements**, people need to be consulted and feel consulted, not only informed. However, there is little in the report on how UN peace operations should be more accountable to people's needs. This is disappointing, as the HIPPO raised expectations for a more reflective stance on the topic.

## SO HOW SHOULD PEACE OPERATIONS BECOME MORE PEOPLE-ORIENTED?

UN peacekeeping operations have long had significant presence outside of the capitals of the countries they are deployed to. Their civil affairs officers have often been the only presence in remote locations, and in some countries such as Kosovo and East Timor, the UN missions have been the government on the ground.

Civil affairs officers, military liaison officers, gender advisors and in recent years community liaison assistants can all reach out and talk with local communities and their representatives. When doing this, missions need to be careful to not only talk with elites, but also to identify credible voices among youth, women and civil society, as well as traditional, religious and academic leaders. A frequent challenge faced is that the same person can be a traditional leader, a businessman and a member of an armed group. Officials may not be the most influential members of society, and could have much to gain from the legitimacy that external peacebuilders confer. Extra care should thus be taken not to appear partial only to local authorities. It is vital to reach out to minorities and those who may not be represented.

Missions could, **and should**, use experts, social anthropologists and others who have a deeper knowledge of the country. Community liaison assistants and community alert networks are useful new innovations, National professional officers have always been a valuable source of knowledge and analysis, and can act as **brokers** between the mission and local communities when appropriate. **Surveys** should be carried out at regular intervals to establish baselines for monitoring of opinions and progress, and building appropriate plans on the results. **New tools** and technologies have made it easier to do quick opinion polls and offer a way to better understand the needs and challenges of affected populations.

Currently, the **civil affairs section** of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations is working on a set of guidelines to improve engagement with local populations. Reflecting the concern highlighted in the peace operations and peacebuilding reviews, the language is shifting from the standard mandate of "extending state authority" to "enhancing and supporting local-level state/society relations".

As Cedric de Coning, Paul Troost and I argue in an article in the **Stability** journal, this work needs further support from member states,civil society and other stakeholders if they want peace operations to succeed in states emerging from conflict. Should UN peace operations address issues of state/society relations, such as inequality, marginalization and lack of social cohesion? Some member states would probably answer no to this question. However, in order to succeed with the task of sustaining peace in their countries, the answer is undoubtedly yes.

The task is far from easy. Exclusion, discrimination and instrumentalized politics are often at the source of the conflict, and strong interests would like to keep it this way. Leadership may be under duress because of long-time resource and capacity constraints, which also increases the chance of leaders falling prey to corruption, collusion with organized crime and self-serving maintenance of the status quo.

## TOWARD PEOPLE-CENTRED PEACEKEEPING?

When member states meet next week to discuss future UN peace operations, they should acknowledge and respond to the challenges that the HIPPO report and the peacebuilding review have identified, and the proposals they have made for how to better include the needs and aspirations of people affected by conflict.

UN peace operations cannot continue to be the option of last resort, muddling through on a minimum of resources and responding to the needs of members of the UN Security Council. Peace operations need to be perceived to be doing something, responding to and dealing with the actual needs of the people and the root causes of conflict. Politics must take primacy, as the HIPPO panel has proclaimed. That dictum should be heeded by member states in the discussions during the next month, in respect of the people who still await peace on the ground.

The Secretary-General's report does mention in several instances the obligation to heed the needs and aspirations of the people. The list of issues it should ideally cover is endless, and other important dimensions of peace operations have fared no better. Nevertheless, the fact that the report picks up on this component should be seen as a will to improve in this particular area. To help the UN succeed, it is necessary to continue to push and support UN peacekeepers and peacebuilders in their pursuit of more people-oriented peace operations, not only by developing guidelines but also by putting these into practice. This will greatly improve the chances of success for peacekeeping operations, and provide more value for money for their funders too.

*John Karlsrud is a Fulbright Scholar and Visiting Fellow at the Center on International Cooperation at NYU and Senior Research Fellow and Manager, Training for Peace programme, Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI). His latest articles include 'Towards More People-Centric Peace Operations: From 'Extension of State Authority' to 'Strengthening Inclusive State-Society Relations'' in Stability, and 'The UN at War: Examining the Consequences of Peace Enforcement Mandates for the UN Peacekeeping Operations in the CAR, the DRC and Mali' in Third World Quarterly. | Twitter: @johnkarlsrud*

# CAN ATTACK HELICOPTERS SAVE U.N. PEACEKEEPING?

by James Traub

**U.N. PEACEKEEPING, BY ITS VERY NATURE, IS ALWAYS IN CRISIS, BUT THE CRISIS IS EVEN WORSE NOW THAN USUAL. PEACEKEEPERS ARE EXPECTED TO DO FAR MORE, IN FAR MORE DIFFICULT PLACES, THAN THEY WERE IN THE PAST. THE U.N. NOW FIELDS ALMOST 130,000 UNIFORMED AND CIVILIAN PERSONNEL, UP FROM 75,000 ONLY A DECADE AGO.**

Does U.N. peacekeeping matter? President Barack Obama believes that it does — and he has advocated the cause more forcefully than any of his predecessors since George H. W. Bush, who once looked to the U.N. to help forge a "new world order." The catastrophes of Somalia, Rwanda, and Bosnia purged that dream forever; but from literally his first day in office, when the United States paid off its outstanding arrears at the U.N., Obama has championed peacekeeping as a low-cost and effective means of policing turbulent places. His administration has spent the last year rounding up fresh commitments from troop-contributing countries; at the U.N. General Assembly session this week, Obama will convene a group of more than 50 heads of state who have made such pledges and will announce them like so many swells at an annual philanthropic dinner.

The one odd feature of this otherwise admirable ritual will be that the United States is not, itself, much of a donor. While the United States is by far the largest donor to peacekeeping operations, paying for 28 percent of the budget, it ranks 74th on the list of troop-contributors, with just 82 military and police officers seconded to peacekeeping operations. (Bangladesh places first with 9,432.) In other realms, including nuclear nonproliferation and climate change, Obama has been quick to recognize that the United States must ante up in order to induce others to do their part. In this case, as American officials are quick to note, the United States is an outsized contributor to global security through its contributions to NATO, its large counterterrorism footprint, and the like. Obama, in short, believes that peacekeeping is good for the United States, but not good for the United States to do.

Other countries apparently have accepted the argument that the United States is already doing its part and have therefore agreed to up their own game. American officials I spoke to said that the pledges to be made at the peacekeeping summit, which will include virtually all European countries as well as major non-European troop contributors, will be specific and substantial — including not just infantry battalions but attack helicopters, transport planes, counter-IED units, hospitals, and over a dozen engineering companies. Some will be made available on a rapid-deployment basis, currently a serious gap in peacekeeping capacity. "These new capabilities can prevent mass killing and ensure that peace agreements are more than words on paper," said Obama at the U.N. today.

## PEACEKEEPING CAN ONLY DEAL WITH SYMPTOMS; BUT A SECONDARY QUESTION IS WHETHER IT CAN EVEN DO THAT IN THE KINDS OF SETTINGS THAT MOST CONCERN THE UNITED STATES AND THE WEST.

If nations make good on their promises — a very large "if" — "it could really be a sea change for us," a U.N. peacekeeping official said to me. For years, the U.N. has taken whatever troops it was offered and lived with the consequences, whether fecklessness or even sexual abuse. Now the U.N. may for the first time have surplus capacity. In that case, as an American official points out, "the U.N. will have an opportunity to repatriate the worst performing units" — and to warn contributors in advance that they will do so.

Beyond filling gaps in capacity, the Obama administration is hoping to precipitate a series of changes that will make peacekeeping more predictable and more robust. Samantha Power, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, pointed out to me that the U.N. has never had the chance to think about force generation in a forward-looking way. Now, owing to the American initiative, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has assembled a list of future as well as current operational needs, and Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has supported a proposal to establish a unit devoted to strategic force generation.

In addition, in May, a group of troop-contributing countries meeting in Rwanda issued the so-called "**Kigali Principles**" vowing, among other things, "to be prepared to use force to protect civilians, as necessary and consistent with the mandate" and "not to stipulate caveats or other restrictions that prevent us from fulfilling our responsibility to protect civilians in accordance with the mandate." The U.N. has increasingly been prepared to use force to defend civilians; in 2013, the Security Council broke with a tradition of impartial peacekeeping by authorizing an "intervention brigade" to fight rebels in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo who had been massacring villagers. The Kigali Principles formalize that commitment. They have been endorsed by many African and European nations, though not by the South Asians, who provide the largest number of peacekeepers and are notorious for imposing such "caveats," which often stipulate that lethal force may be used only for self-defense.

## THE CRISIS OF PEACEKEEPING

U.N. peacekeeping, by its very nature, is always in crisis, but the crisis is even worse now than usual. Peacekeepers are expected to do far more, in far more difficult places, than they were in the past. The U.N. now fields almost 130,000 uniformed and civilian personnel, up from 75,000 only a decade ago. While once the U.N. could hold to the pretense that it does not do peacekeeping where "there is no peace to keep," peacekeepers have increasingly been placed in anarchic settings where the objective is less monitoring a shaky peace than "conflict management," as a June **report** by the High-Level Independent Panel on U.N. Peace Operations (HIPPO) puts it. Two-thirds of peacekeepers now operate in active conflict areas, including Congo, the Central African Republic, and Burundi.

At the same time, the European forces that once formed the backbone of many tough peacekeeping missions have vanished. The highest-ranking Western troop-contributing country is Italy, which ranks 26th with 1,103 soldiers and police officers, almost all of them in Lebanon. The U.N. can call on tens of thousands of lightly armed African or South Asian peacekeepers but is desperately short of "niche capacities," including engineering, airlift, medevac, intelligence, and surveillance. In short, the U.N. Security Council is sending peacekeepers into ever more perilous settings and asking them to do more without providing the wherewithal to help them succeed. As the HIPPO report puts it, "there is a clear sense of a widening gap between what is being asked of [U.N.] peace operations today and what they are able to deliver."

Inside the U.N., there is an overwhelming sense of futility surrounding the vast missions in Congo, Darfur, and particularly in South Sudan — where peacekeepers were sent to help a new nation struggle to its feet and have now been thrust into the middle of a civil war between two rival camps of the government. The available remedies, including the useful technical fixes proposed by the high-level panel — improved training for peacekeepers, more carefully limited mandates, more predictable financing, and the establishment of a modest stand-by capacity for rapid deployment — don't hold out the prospect for fundamental change. Obama's pledging conference really is the best news for peacekeeping in years.

But it is important to understand what those new engineering brigades and heavy weapons can and can't do. What they can do is help peacekeepers protect civilians and themselves and prevent host governments from being overrun by insurgent forces. As a U.N. peacekeeping official puts it, "You can't deploy into a setting like Mali without being able to see over the horizon or over-the-horizon visibility and protect against IEDs. Otherwise, a lot of peacekeepers are going to get killed or injured." Both American and U.N. officials say that they now have sufficient pledges to meet current and immediately foreseeable needs — not only for infantry and helicopters but for crucial "niche capacities" like engineering, medical care, and airlift. If true, that's a big deal.

## IS FORCE ALONE ENOUGH?

I've been reporting from conflict zones and peacekeeping settings for 15 years. I don't doubt that robust mandates and well-equipped soldiers make a difference. On a visit to Sierra Leone in 2000, I was very impressed with the spit and polish of the Indian contingent I spent time with — until I returned home and read that they had been **taken prisoner** by rebels with the Revolutionary United Front. The troops had neither the mandate nor the firepower to fight back. The government might well have fallen had the British not sent 700 paratroopers to Freetown, the nation's capital. The humiliation marked a turning point for the U.N., which fired the Indian force commander, added new troops, and instructed them to fire on rebels who threatened either them or civilians. The rebellion died out, the government stabilized, and the peacekeepers went home.

Force matters — but only under the right circumstances. I've also spent time with Pakistani troops in eastern Congo who were spoiling for a fight with local insurgents and Rwandan ex-génocidaires. In Congo, the U.N. has sometimes rolled over, as when they **allowed** M23 rebels to take the major city of Goma without interference in 2012, and sometimes fought back, as when the "intervention brigade" defeated M23 the following year. Robust peacekeeping saves lives, but it does not change the underlying situation.

The most important book to be written about peacekeeping in recent years is *The Fog of Peace*, a memoir by Jean-Marie Guéhenno, the head of the U.N.'s Department of Peacekeeping from 2000 to 2008. Guéhenno writes about Congo at great length and with great sadness. He writes that his hope in dispatching troops there was to "change the political dynamics on the ground" by persuading spoilers that "the commitment of the international community was stronger than they had anticipated." That never happened, in part because diplomats were unwilling to be as forceful with Congo's political leaders as the peacekeepers were, at least intermittently, with troublemakers. Guéhenno writes that "military operations became a convenient distraction, which allowed the Security Council to neglect the politics of Congo." At bottom, Guéhenno concludes, "robust peacekeeping is an empty concept if it is not supported by a robust political posture. The United Nations does not have the capacity to enforce peace."

**INSIDE THE U.N., THERE IS AN OVERWHELMING SENSE OF FUTILITY SURROUNDING THE VAST MISSIONS IN CONGO, DARFUR, AND PARTICULARLY IN SOUTH SUDAN — WHERE PEACEKEEPERS WERE SENT TO HELP A NEW NATION STRUGGLE TO ITS FEET AND HAVE NOW BEEN THRUST INTO THE MIDDLE OF A CIVIL WAR BETWEEN TWO RIVAL CAMPS OF THE GOVERNMENT.**

Peacekeeping, at best, buys diplomats time and space to cajole, threaten, or bribe domestic political actors into behaving in such a way that enhances their legitimacy in the eyes of citizens — and thus drains support from the insurgents. That has happened in some places, including Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Côte d'Ivoire. It has not happened in Congo, or in South Sudan, where political leaders have conscripted their tribal followers in a brutal battle for supremacy. In these and other settings, **writes** Richard Gowan, a peacekeeping expert affiliated with the Center on International Cooperation (of which I am a fellow), blue helmets "have to try to defend civilians from precisely the governments and security forces they are meant to partner with." Gowan argues that the U.N. must be prepared to consider "the nuclear option of withdrawing peacekeeping forces more rapidly in those cases where national leaders grow too confrontational or autocratic."

Guéhenno's experience leads him to much the same conclusion, though with an important proviso. Congo might have been best served, he writes, by a withdrawal of peacekeepers, but only if it had been accompanied by "a much earlier and more much more strategic engagement in the politics" of the country. The HIPPO panel, staffed by U.N. insiders, does not recommend any nuclear options. It does, however, endorse Guéhenno's view that the core capacity of peacekeeping is political, not military. The panel used

the term "peace operations" to refer to the entire spectrum of diplomatic, economic, and military engagement, arguing that "the primacy of politics should be the hallmark of the approach of the United Nations to the resolution of conflict." The panel proposed that peacekeeping missions only be dispatched "in support of political solutions" and offers as many suggestions for beefing up the U.N.'s diplomatic and mediation capacity as for improving military readiness. What the panel did not say is that political failure is not a matter of technique but of will. It's far easier for the Security Council to send peacekeepers to a trouble spot than to agree to apply pressure on political leaders whom some members of the council invariably view as allies.

## NECESSARY, BUT NOT SUFFICIENT

Samantha Power knows all this. Providing more troops and niche capabilities, she said, "is not sufficient, but it is necessary for a lot of the reforms we need." And since the kinds of political solutions that make effective peacekeeping possible are not in the offing in many of the most dangerous settings, it's irresponsible to wait. "Peacekeeping fundamentally deals with symptoms," she acknowledged. "But we have to deal with the fact that people are dying and getting raped right now." I can't argue with that proposition.

Peacekeeping can only deal with symptoms; but a secondary question is whether it can even do that in the kinds of settings that most concern the United States and the West. The scale of the killing and mayhem in the nightmare zones of sub-Saharan Africa — where so much peacekeeping has been concentrated — constitute a pressing moral obligation as well as a genuine, but secondary, national security interest. The United States has good reason to try to stop the Central African Republic from descending into complete anarchy. It has, however, a much more compelling interest in preventing al Qaeda from gaining control over northern Mali. Can robust peacekeeping even work in such places?

Mali is the wild frontier of peacekeeping. After a combination of indigenous rebels and Islamists from al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb threatened Bamako, the nation's capital, in early 2013, France dispatched 4,000 troops, along with fighter jets, to defend its former colony. Once the insurgents had been pushed back into the hinterland, the French forces gave way to MINUSMA, the U.N. peacekeeping mission, staffed with 10,000 uniformed personnel. The former colonial master administering a beating and then handing off to the U.N. was a pattern familiar from Sierra Leone, Cote d'Ivoire, and other ex-colonies. But because the terrorist presence made Mali a threat in the way that those settings had not been, MINUSMA includes over 1,000 soldiers from 14 European countries, chief among them the Netherlands and Sweden. Mali is thus both a test of whether U.N. peacekeeping can work in a setting that includes Islamic terrorists as well as local insurgents, and whether the new European commitment to peacekeeping that Obama has encouraged can make a significant difference in a place that matters greatly to the West.

For the moment, MINUSMA is teetering between survival and disaster. Peacekeepers have been **killed** by IEDs and by coordinated suicide bombings. Better equipment and technology would certainly help. Peacekeepers in open-bed pickups are sitting ducks for ambushes; up-armored vehicles and counter-IED technology would save lives and raise morale. However, so long as North Africa remains a breeding ground for al Qaeda, and perhaps the Islamic State, the peacekeepers in Mali will find themselves fighting an enemy far better armed and more dangerous than the M23 rebels — and also willing to die rather than compromise. Mali still may be a bridge too far.

## COUNTERTERRORISM AND BLUE HELMETS

The HIPPO panel bluntly concluded that U.N. peacekeepers "lack the specific equipment, intelligence, logistics, capabilities and specialized military preparation required" for military counterterrorism operations and should not be asked to undertake them. That may be slightly too categorical a distinction. Any imaginable mission in the Middle Eastern or North African conflict zones that pose the greatest threat to the West will involve, as it has in Mali, confrontation with terrorists as well as with the usual insurgents. In practice, it will prove impossible to limit the U.N. to more conventional peacekeeping efforts while assigning the counterterrorism work to someone else.

The U.N. may have to face the question of what role it can play in the fight against Islamic terrorism, sooner rather than later. What will happen in Libya if the **peace agreement** forged by U.N. mediator Bernardino León actually holds and both sides look to an outside force to police the agreement? Or Yemen? Or even Syria?

The answer may be that as the ratio of Islamic extremists to indigenous insurgents goes up, the utility of U.N. peacekeeping goes down. When I asked Samantha Power what kind of force she could envision in a setting like Libya, she suggested a multinational coalition or regional force; one possible model would be the African Union force (logistically supported by the U.N.) that now patrols Somalia — another setting in which counterterrorism operations are a priority. The U.N. Security Council would authorize a non-U.N. force — though one wonders who would volunteer to go. The Arab League has **announced** that it will form a joint military force to intervene in neighboring states wracked by insurgency. Right now, however, a coalition of Arab armies are busy making war in Yemen. Peacemaking may not be their métier.

Like counterinsurgency and other refinements of violence, peacekeeping looks better from far away than it does from close up. It sounds antiseptic and sometimes feels heroic, but it's mostly a desperate form of coping. We no longer believe in a new world order. We are stuck with the one we have, with its collapsing states, rising extremism, and geopolitical friction. In that terribly fallen world, it is absolutely true, as Samantha Power says, we cannot wait for the light of reason to dawn. President Obama deserves credit for doing what he can to strengthen this frail instrument. But we have to remind ourselves that force rarely solves problems and sometimes makes them worse. We resort to it so often because we lack the will, and the understanding, to cure the diseases that plague nations.

This article was originally published by *Foreign Policy* on September 28 2015

*James Traub* is a fellow at the *Center on International Cooperation at NYU*, *"Terms of Engagement,"* his column for *ForeignPolicy.com*, runs weekly. | *Twitter*: *@JamesTraub1*

©MINUSMA

# UN PEACE OPERATIONS AND COUNTER-TERRORISM - A BRIDGE TOO FAR?

by John Karlsrud

**UN PEACE OPERATIONS WERE VEERING FROM PEACEKEEPING TOWARD CONFLICT MANAGEMENT, AND STATED THAT THEY "LACK THE SPECIFIC EQUIPMENT, INTELLIGENCE, LOGISTICS, CAPABILITIES AND SPECIALIZED MILITARY PREPARATION REQUIRED" TO DEAL WITH VIOLENT EXTREMISTS.**

During the United Nations General Assembly, U.S. President Barack Obama chaired two summits – the first on **peace operations** on September 28, and one the following day on **counter-terrorism**. His participation in both demonstrated the level of commitment of the U.S., and the American belief that the UN is still relevant to tackling these challenges. The summits have also drawn some attention to the possible convergence between these two policy fields. What are the implications of this convergence? And, are UN peace operations really able to take on counter-terrorism and countering violent extremism (CVE) tasks?

In this article, I argue that the UN neither will be principally, nor operationally ready to fight terrorist groups, and that coalitions of the willing and regional organizations may be best positioned to take on these tasks. Furthermore, I argue that the increasing focus on CVE, with the attendant resources that are brought to the table, limits the space for more politically oriented approaches. It also risks marginalizing, politicizing and securitizing the peacebuilding, local governance and development agendas.

Counter-terrorism has been high on the international agenda since the 9/11-attacks. In recent years it has been subsumed under the wider and less ominous sounding concept of countering violent extremism (CVE). For many people the two terms amount to the same thing, but the latter is considered more polite in certain circles. At the UN, the CVE agenda is also moving from the margins to center stage.

During 2015, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon participated in a U.S.-arranged CVE **summit**. He warned against a securitized approach to CVE, and outlined a future **prevention agenda** where the main goals must be to better understand the motivations for joining groups such as the Islamic State (IS); avoid using 'terrorism' as a label to eliminate political opposition; and deal with root causes through strengthening governance, the respect for human rights, more accountable institutions, service delivery and political participation.

At the recent Leader's Summit on peacekeeping held during the General Assembly and chaired by U.S. President Barack Obama, UK Prime Minister David Cameron was not the only one **citing terrorism** as a motivating factor for **contributing more troops** and resources to UN peace operations. President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda scolded the UN for peaceful coexistence with terrorist groups, while the U.S. Mission to the UN cited the "**jihadist insurgency**" in Mali as an example of a challenge that the UN needed to be better equipped to deal with. U.S. officials have emphasized that America is not outsourcing the so-called "War on Terror" to the UN; **rather it is taking a burden-sharing approach**. On the other hand, the recently released **US presidential memorandum** stressed that the UN will not be able take on "more forceful military interventions that need to be carried out in non-permissive environments". However, Richard Gowan, **Non-Resident Fellow at CIC**, has argued that using UN peace operations to deal with situations of counter-terrorism is one area where the veto powers of the Security Council may be able to agree.

## A CHANGING CONTEXT?

A record 59.5 million people were forcibly displaced in 2014. The UNHCR global trends report for 2014, tellingly titled **World at War**, paints a bleak picture with a four-fold increase of people forced to leave their homes due to conflict during the previous four years. While the number of conflicts had been steadily declining for more than a decade, the last few years has witnessed a wave of new conflicts in Libya, Syria, Mali, Yemen and the Central African Republic (CAR). Old conflicts have rekindled, leading to a **tripling of civil conflicts** between 2007 and 2014. The UN is struggling with more 'traditional' protection threats of formidable scale: the **deteriorating situation in CAR**, and in South Sudan, where hundreds of thousands of civilians in danger outside of UN camps are trapped in a civil war that has only increased in brutality and abuse during the **last few months**.

However, it is the arguably new threats of violent extremism and organized crime, combined with these traditional challenges, that are propelling discussions of change at the UN – particularly to its peace operations. Boko Haram, IS, the Al Shabaab and other extremist groups in Libya, Mali, Syria and Yemen have challenged policy-makers and the multilateral system, which is poorly equipped to respond to these violent, but also multifaceted challenges. These groups add to the political complexity and increase the intractable nature of conflict in these countries. Some groups can be talked to, while others have no interest in negotiating with the UN.

In recent years, the UN Security Council has been giving increasingly expansive and robust mandates to UN peace operations. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) in 2013, it authorized a peace enforcement mission that pitted blue helmets against identified rebel groups, tasking the Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) to '**neutralize**' these armed groups. This was in clear contradiction of principles guiding UN peacekeeping operations including impartiality, obtaining consent of the main parties, and only using force in self-defence or in defence of the mandate. The UN missions authorized in 2013 and 2014 in Mali and CAR were given mandates to 'stabilise' and 'extend state authority', effectively asking them to confront rebel and extremist groups in Mali as well as sectarian groups in CAR. In the next few years, multidimensional missions to Libya, Yemen and Syria are also possible.

At UN Headquarters, staff only half-jokingly say that the organization has moved from being in the crossfire into the crosshairs, attacked no longer for where they are, but for who they are. The increasing attacks on blue helmets in Darfur, DRC and Mali testify to this impression.

In Mali, the UN mission is equipped with a mandate to extend state authority to the northern parts of the country. Local communities in that region see this as taking sides against them. The mission has thus far suffered a high price: **40 military peacekeepers have been killed** in "malicious acts" since deployment in April 2013. It is difficult to draw a line where pursuit of armed groups behind these attacks turns into a counter-terrorism operation. This is particularly true when such pursuit is backed by a **mandate** "to support the cantonment, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of armed groups, as well as the progressive redeployment of the Malian Defence and Security Forces especially in the North of Mali." The UN is not seen as impartial when it supports the extension of the state's authority – perceived as illegitimate in the eyes of the local community in the north – rather than seeking to heal fractured **state-society relations**.

In Somalia, the African Union mission AMISOM has been fighting the Al Shabaab since 2007, at great **human**, political and economic costs. The mission has made important steps forward, but together with the Federal Government of Somalia it is struggling to provide the 'liberated' areas with security, service delivery and a real feeling of a peace dividend. The AU Peace and Security Council has also given a mandate to the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) to fight the Boko Haram in northern Nigeria and Chad. It has reportedly had **some initial progress** but is not yet fully deployed and operational.

## COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM MOVES TO CENTER STAGE AT THE UN

Inside the UN Secretariat, a growing number of bodies deal with counter-terrorism and CVE. More are joining the field. The **UN Security-Council Counter-Terrorism Committee**, established by **Security Council resolution 1373** in 2001 in the immediate aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, provides **guidelines, suggestions for codes and standards** and facilitates **technical assistance** to member states.

In 2005, the Secretary-General established a **Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF)**, endorsed by member states of the UN General Assembly through the **Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy** adopted in 2006. Within CTITF, the **UN Counter-Terrorism Centre (UNCCT)** was established. The Centre received a donation from Saudi-Arabia of $100 million in 2014 to strengthen its "**tools, technologies and methods to confront and eliminate the threat of terrorism**". It is also partially funded by Germany, the UK and the U.S. According to one UN official, the CTITF/UNCCT now accounts for roughly half of the DPA budget and has reached out to the UN mission in Mali, UN agencies and others to develop projects, **in total 31 so far**.

The convergence of the peace operations and counter-terrorism agendas is not only at the rhetorical level. CTITF has been **visiting Mali** and MINUSMA offering funding for activities that align with its narrow objectives. As there has so far been limited scope for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) in Mali to deal with the political dimension, mission creep is a tempting proposition. The generous but very specific funding accumulated by DPA's counter-terrorism/CVE programs could potentially skew priorities. This risks creating supply-driven niche programming at headquarters and in the field, rather than trying to address the larger political problems driving the conflict by an objective analysis of the problems and needs.

The **Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions (OROLSI)** within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) has shown keen interest in expanding its activities to help countries prevent and counter violent extremism, even those not hosting an active peace operation. A recent report published by the UN University (UNU) Centre for Policy Research, with the support of the UN DDR section, asks the rhetorical question: **UN DDR in an Era of Violent Extremism: Is It Fit for Purpose?** In the preface of the report, OROLSI's head Assistant Secretary-General Dimitry Titov agrees with the problem statement. He asks how "we can move forward together in exploring DDR and CVE programming", and he agrees with the editors that a new policy merged area of "Demobilization and Disengagement of Violent Extremists" (DDVE) could be the way forward.

The report suggests the UN may need to adapt its guidelines for DDR in order to deal with foreign terrorist fighters, terrorist rehabilitation and involuntary detention. It states that UN peace operations are already moving in such a direction, and acknowledges that this is in contradiction to the aforementioned peacekeeping principles. The report also raises a red flag by noting that such contradiction presents "a host of safety, legal, ethical, operational, and reputational risks to the UN, its staff, Member States, and donors". Despite this, the authors press for a stronger engagement of the UN in these areas. Overall, the unclear division of labor between the UN Secretariat and other departments and agencies, combined with the potential of supply-driven programming, should be of great concern to the UN.

## A DIVIDED HOUSE

The **High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) report** emphasized the primacy of political solutions. It stated, "there is a clear sense of a widening gap between what is being asked of [UN] peace operations today and what they are able to deliver". Jean-Marie Guéhenno, the former head of UN peacekeeping, argued that robust peacekeeping has to be supported by a **robust political strategy**. However, institutional dynamics can also play a role. Some among the senior officials at the UN argued for the mission in Mali to maintain the 'market share' over and above regional organizations or bilateral deployments. These officials believe the UN has the most competence, has been in the peacekeeping business the longest, and should not be frightened by the challenges and uncertainties on the ground but rather adapt to changing circumstances and not be hindered by outdated principles.

The HIPPO panel **drew a red line against counter-terrorism**. It argued that UN peace operations were veering from peacekeeping toward conflict management, and stated that they "lack the specific equipment, intelligence, logistics, capabilities and specialized military preparation required" to deal with violent extremists. The report emphasized that when deployed in parallel with a counter-terrorism operation, "[t]he UN must in these situations maintain a strict adherence to its impartial commitment to the respect for human rights. When such non-UN forces depart, the UN should not be called upon to assume residual tasks beyond its capability". Aside from the HIPPO panel, others have also **questioned** whether UN peace operations is the right tool for counter-terrorism situations, particularly when not supported by a strong political mandate.

The UN DPKO is today a divided house between those that want UN peace operations to 'evolve' and be 'relevant' to the threats on the ground, and those that stand by the traditional principles of peacekeeping. A UN official told me that those diverging opinions have created a "massive rift in DPKO". On the one hand, some see the core principles of the UN threatened – and by extension, the viability of UN peacekeeping as a tool in the future. On the other hand, others see new areas where the UN can engage and maintain market share, continuing to be relevant to challenges on the ground and to member states that advocate for more

robust peace operations. But the question remains whether the UN in places like Mali is mandated to deal with conflicts that go against the principles of the organization, and whether these conflicts can undermine the long-term support and legitimacy of UN peacekeeping as a tool to help countries emerging from conflict.

## A BRIDGE TOO FAR?

In his leaked 2007 **End of Mission report**, Alvaro de Soto, long time senior UN official and former Special Envoy to the Middle East, condemned the UN and the Secretary-General for limiting the space that the UN established over past decades for engaging with all actors in conflict, including those considered "beyond the pale." De Soto resigned from his post because of the restrictions he was given on engaging with Hamas and Syria. In his report, he warned against establishing a new precedent for UN officials, that of talking only with those actors seen to be in the clear: "Since the late 1980s the UN has become rather adept dealing with groups that most governments can't or won't touch. If this ability is removed we would seriously weaken our hand as a peacemaking tool".

The branding of rebel groups as terrorists can limit the ability of UN Special Envoys and peace operations to engage with these groups. This is part of a general tendency, starting with the "War on Terror", wherein the maneuvering space of the UN has increasingly been limited. This has hampered the ability of the UN to broker peace and prevent conflict. The limits placed on dialogue have been paralleled by an increasing belief in the use of force to solve conflict – with limited results, considering the fall-out of Western engagements in Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya. Arguably, security thinking and terms such as "counter-insurgency" and "counter-terrorism" have replaced **more political approaches to solving conflict**, or seeking to understand and deal with root causes.

The central tenet of the HIPPO report is its emphasis of the primacy of politics. It argues for scaling down the engagement in substantive areas in countries where there is no peace to keep, rather than increasing them. It seems the HIPPO red line drawn against counter-terrorism is already fast receding in the rear view mirror under the pressure of increased engagement in DDR and CVE.

The UN and its lead operations departments such as DPKO should be careful not to rush into providing technical solutions for problems that are deeply political and often rooted in longstanding development challenges. Going forward, the UN and member states need to carefully consider the grave implications of merging peace operations with the agendas of counter-terrorism and countering violent extremism. The increasing focus on CVE, with the attendant resources that are brought to the table, can limit the space for more politically-oriented approaches and risks marginalizing, politicizing and securitizing the humanitarian, peacebuilding, local governance and development agendas.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon **will soon be presenting a Plan of Action** on preventing violent extremism, likely before the end of this year. His emphasis on the preventative pillar is a positive sign. However, there is still the danger that existing development and peacebuilding work on facilitating consultation, addressing root causes, strengthening service delivery, rule of law and justice may be rebranded as countering and preventing violent extremism, in order to access new funding streams. E.g. UNDP has years of experience in working in this area under banner of '**community violence reduction**'.

Some commentators argue that the UN may well be asked, **sooner rather than later**, to deploy multidimensional missions with enforcement mandates where it will face terrorism in countries like Libya, Yemen and even Syria. The argument that UN peace

operations are deployed to face situations where there is no peace to keep, and where violent extremists and terrorists are part of the picture, is well taken. So are the many **calls** for more sophisticated capabilities to enable the UN to protect itself against these threats on the ground. However, this should not stop the UN from warning the UN Security Council against prematurely deploying UN peace operations to these situations.

On the ground, missions should carefully consider activities countering violent extremism, bearing in mind the core principles of peacekeeping. While there is a strong need to further strengthen the capability and will of the UN to robustly protect civilians, these tools should not be used to make the UN participate in longer term counter-terrorism operations. Both field and headquarters staff should continue to stand by the values of the organization, and not try to defend its 'market share' of global peace operations.

## UN STABILIZATION MISSIONS AND BURDEN-SHARING

There are no easy answers to the challenges that some of today's and most of tomorrow's peace operation theatres will bring. Part of the solution must be to clearly delineate what UN peace operations can and cannot do. The HIPPO report and the follow-up report from the Secretary-General both drew the line against counter-terrorism operations. The recent US **presidential memorandum** on peace operations argues that although UN peace operations in "select and exceptional cases" can be tasked to "conduct offensive military operations against armed groups that act as spoilers outside of a peace process", it adds that UN "peace operations cannot substitute for diplomatic solutions to end a war, nor for more forceful military interventions that need to be carried out in non-permissive environments by individual states or coalitions that possess the will and capacity to do so." The memorandum suggests that UN peace operations can "replace national or coalition military forces in operations once an area has transitioned from an immediate crisis to a more permissive environment." It does not seem to support the kind of co-deployment of a counter-terrorism force and a UN peace operation that we see in Mali.

The HIPPO report declared opposition of UN involvement in counter-terrorism, but it also asked for more clarification on the use of the concept of 'stabilization' in UN peace operations. There are divergent understandings of this term among member states and the UN, ranging from peace enforcement to peacebuilding efforts. But what future role should we expect the UN to have in Iraq, Libya, Syria and Yemen? If the UN Security Council is not able or willing to outsource peace enforcement missions in these countries to other organizations, new options and modus operandi could be considered. In my article The **UN at War**, I commented that the UN quite literally was going green in Mali: troop contributing countries have resisted painting their vehicles and helicopters white, or simply did not care to do so. In my view, the blue helmets and white vehicles should be preserved as a tool that signifies impartiality, consent and limited use of force.

Following these developments to their logical conclusion, one could argue that on its spectrum of operations the UN may need a new tool of stabilization missions. In our forthcoming book, *UN Peacekeeping Doctrine Towards the Post-Brahimi Era? Adapting to Stabilization, Protection and New Threats*, co-authors Chiyuki Aoi, Cedric de Coning and I argue the UN to consider developing a doctrine for a new category of UN stabilization missions.

A UN stabilization mission would be clearly delineated from other UN peace operations, able to engage in offensive operations for limited durations, but the focus would be more on long-term stability. As such a mission would be seen as partial to the government of the day, it would not necessarily be mandated to mediate between the parties. When developing the doctrine, one would need to also carefully consider the implications of an offensive posture for the routinely substantive tasks of UN peace operations, and

limit these accordingly. The HIPPO report similarly recommended such an approach. A stabilization force would not be using blue helmets and white vehicles, clearly demarcating itself from traditional UN peacekeeping missions. These stabilization missions would allow the UN to take on counter-terrorism tasks for limited durations.

However, while UN stabilization missions may provide a level of legitimacy and funding, a number of disincentives should also be taken into account. In order to sustain fatalities and casualties, participants in these missions are likely to be coalitions of the willing, but under a UN banner. That means adding several new layers of UN accountability and human rights reporting mechanisms. Two current missions, the French **Barkhane** mission in Mali and the **Global Coalition to Counter ISIL**, are currently less burdened by these forms of accountability, or by having to develop and relate to complicated UN rules for contracting and management, or slowing down deployment, construction of new bases and logistics in the field, among a host of other issues. If disregarding the principal issues and focusing on pragmatic challenges, for member states, the question will be whether sufficient incentives exist to undertake these tasks under a UN heading, or whether they should participate in a coalition of the willing outside the UN framework.

Taking into consideration that similar ongoing operations are shouldered by the African Union and sub-regional organizations on the African continent, and that likely future operations of this kind will be in Libya, Yemen and Syria, it may make more sense to undertake such operations in coalitions of the willing. This would give the lead regional organization/group of states the space to decide on a range of issues that might be more constrained in a UN setting. Such missions should be sequenced to not further undermine traditional UN peace operations. Coalitions of the willing, and in some instances regional organizations, will remain the only options with the requisite political will, capabilities, doctrines and staying power to conduct counter-terrorism operations, furnished with a UN mandate. However, with **military solutions enjoying dim prospects**, they need to be paralleled with a long-term political strategy to enjoy any chance of success.

The HIPPO panel recommended that the UN should use the full spectrum of its operations more flexibly to respond to changing needs on the ground. Special political missions, combined with strong mediation, intercommunity dialogue, rule of law and governance components addressing state-society relations from the bottom up, could in many instances more effectively address challenges in fragile states before they erupt. However, the way SPMs are financed, combined with sensitivities about sovereignty and the wish to be seen as doing something, will keep larger-scale state-centric peacekeeping operations as the preferred choice of the Security Council.

To achieve a balance and burden-sharing between the UN and other actors is more important than ever. Here, I have argued that there are principled as well as operational reasons why the UN should not conduct counter-terrorism, and that the UN should carefully consider the implications of bringing significant parts of its core business under a CVE umbrella. In broad terms, the limits of the UN also converge with the disincentives for member states and regional actors for conducting counter-terrorism operations under a UN banner.

*John Karlsrud is a Fulbright Scholar and Visiting Fellow at the Center on International Cooperation at NYU and Senior Research Fellow and Manager, Training for Peace programme, Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI). His latest articles include 'Towards More People-Centric Peace Operations: From 'Extension of State Authority' to 'Strengthening Inclusive State-Society Relations" in Stability, and 'The UN at War: Examining the Consequences of Peace Enforcement Mandates for the UN Peacekeeping Operations in the CAR, the DRC and Mali' in Third World Quarterly. | **Twitter**: @JohnKarlsrud*

© UN

# CHARM, CRITICISE, COMPROMISE

by Richard Gowan

## GOOD DIPLOMATS KNOW HOW TO DELIVER TOUGH MESSAGES TO IMPORTANT COUNTERPARTS WITHOUT CREATING HAVOC.

Good diplomats know how to deliver tough messages to important counterparts without creating havoc. It's a three-part process. First, you need to butter up your target with compliments. Second, you have to express your concerns firmly, but not hysterically. Third, you must hint at a compromise that will let everyone save face. US Ambassador to the UN Samantha Power showed off this "charm, criticise and compromise" approach in New Delhi last week. The topic was UN peacekeeping. The goal was to resolve growing tensions over the performance of Indian troops in troublespots like South Sudan and the Congo.

US diplomats, and even UN staff members, argue that Indian units are too cautious in reacting to threats. This has been brought into sharp focus in South Sudan, where Indian peacekeepers have guarded thousands of vulnerable civilians on their bases but refused to take more robust action against marauding militias. Such incidents are hurting India's longstanding reputation as a pillar of UN operations.

Outgoing ambassador to the UN, Asoke Mukerji, has sternly and cogently picked apart criticism of Indian troops' performance. The Security Council, as he points out, has often pushed missions away from peacekeeping towards peace enforcement or outright war-fighting in the face of mounting violence. The P5 still risk relatively few of their personnel on UN missions, although China has recently promised to send up to 8,000 extra troops. Meanwhile, Delhi appears to be pulling back from UN missions. India has not sent troops to the UN's two newest operations in Mali and the Central African Republic.

More broadly, however, top Indian decision-makers don't seem engaged with UN peacekeeping. In September, US President Barack Obama convened fellow leaders at UN headquarters in New York to discuss the organisation's missions. Prime Minister Narendra Modi attended. But neither his speech nor body language indicated a fascination with blue helmets.

The very fact that Obama hosted this summit points to a small but repeated irritant in US-India relations. The current US administration sees UN missions as useful, if flawed, mechanisms for maintaining international stability. And Power feels that UN troops have a moral obligation to take tough action in the face of serious challenges.

This was the core of her message last Friday. She didn't have to work to butter up her audience, talking about India's "astounding" contribution to UN operations since the 1950s and 1960s. Box ticked. Then she moved to the difficult bit. Power admitted that the UN's decision to deploy peacekeepers in risky environments "created a predicament for India and many traditional contributors to peacekeeping". She went on to present an indirect but clear critique of the Indian forces' failure to use force on UN missions.

This was presumably meant to make Indian officials squirm. But Power had not just come to Delhi to spread discomfort. She also had a compromise to present. The Obama administration has, she noted, been pushing countries to "step up" and deploy more troops on UN missions. Obama's September summit generated pledges of up to 50,000 new soldiers and police, and many appear ready and able to go on the hardest assignments. This being so, Power underlined, "countries that have qualms with the mandates, or doubt their capacity to do what is asked of them, should no longer feel pressured into deploying to missions simply because nobody else will". This may sound dismissive, but it is in fact an olive branch. If India really does not believe in what the UN is doing in places like South Sudan, it has an opportunity to get its troops out.

This does not mean that the US wants India to give up on UN missions altogether. India could still play a leading role in places where the mandates are less sensitive. It can also buttress the UN system by deploying more specialised assets, like field hospitals and engineers, rather than combat troops, and using its experience in UN missions to train up-and-coming peacekeeping nations. India could establish a positive role as the guiding start of more or less standard peace operations, while other countries focus on peace enforcement. This would be a substantial, serious and relatively low risk responsibility. Either way, Power has offered India a way out of an unnecessary but nasty struggle with the US, with relatively few hard feelings.

This article was originally published in *The Indian Express* on November 24 2015

*Richard Gowan is a non-resident fellow at the Center on International Cooperation at NYU, where he was previously research director. He is also a fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations, teaches conflict resolution at Columbia's School of International and Public Affairs, and writes a weekly column ("Diplomatic Fallout") for World Politics Review.* | ***Twitter: @RichardGowan1***

©ALBERT GONZALEZ FARRAN / UNAM

# TESTING INDONESIA'S COMMITMENT TO UN PEACEKEEPING

by Jim Della-Giacoma

**INDONESIA BY BECOMING A MORE PROMINENT CONTRIBUTOR TO PEACE OPERATIONS IS EXPOSING ITSELF TO GREATER BURDENS OF RESPONSIBILITY AND IN THE FUTURE GRAVER MORAL DILEMMAS.**

Indonesia is committed to becoming one of the top ten countries contributing to UN peace operations. With its Roadmap Vision 4,000 Peacekeepers, Jakarta aims to dramatically increase the 2,724 peacekeepers now deployed in ten UN missions by 2019.

Compared to 2014, this would be a doubling of troops deployed in only five years. This is a noble and ambitious goal of international good citizenship, but what will be the challenges on this journey?

Last month a panel of experts chaired by Nobel laureate and former Timor-Leste president Jose Ramos Horta gave a few hints when it laid out an ambitious vision about how to bring the organization's peace operations into the 21st century.

Commissioned by the outgoing UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon as a legacy project, Uniting Our Strengths for Peace issues a challenge to the Security Council and member states to change the way peace operations are conducted.

The panel argued for four shifts in UN peace operations.

First, it made the case for the primacy of politics in peace operations, which include peacekeeping, special political missions, and the mandating of envoys.

Second, it said these missions needed to be more flexible in responding to the situation on the ground, including deploying more quickly. Indonesia's bold commitment could help this.

Third, the UN needs to be a better partner to other organizations, sometimes acting as much an enabler as an implementer. Finally, the UN Secretariat need to be change the way it administers peace missions to be more field-focused and people-centered.

The proliferation of peace operations shows they have value as a strategic tool, especially in those situations where something must be done but in the face of competing national interests nobody quite knows what to do. After the drawdown of NATO forces from Afghanistan, the United Nations is the go to organization deploying the largest number of troops and police to global hotspots — more than 120,000 uniformed and civilian personnel serve under the blue flag in 39 missions.

But as Indonesia prepares to host the Asia-Pacific Regional Peacekeeping Meeting in Jakarta on July 27-28 policymakers should study closely Uniting for Peace.

In it, they may find some positions that are close to their own. In other cases, the panel has set out to confront those who mandate, pay for, and supply personnel to peace operations.

## THE PROLIFERATION OF PEACE OPERATIONS SHOWS THEY HAVE VALUE AS A STRATEGIC TOOL, ESPECIALLY IN THOSE SITUATIONS WHERE SOMETHING MUST BE DONE BUT IN THE FACE OF COMPETING NATIONAL INTERESTS NOBODY QUITE KNOWS WHAT TO DO.

In a public address at the UN in New York in February, Indonesia's Deputy Permanent Representative Ambassador Muhammad Anshor expressed hope that the panel would provide some viable solutions to current challenges. He recognized mandates are becoming more complex and multi-dimensional, such as the deployment of the Force Intervention Brigade in the UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO).

"While the Brigade has been seen as an effective element in neutralizing armed groups, there are risks whereby MONUSCO is seen as a party to the conflict and perceived partial. This has undermined the credibility of the mission, and might be harmful to future peacekeeping and other related UN overtures there as well," Ambassador Anshor remarked.

The last major review of peace operations was the Brahimi report of August 2000 and it focused on the UN's ability to credibly project force. The latest panel has deliberated after a decade and a half where military force has been vigorously applied in Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya but has lead to neither peace nor stability in these lands.

The panel acknowledges the Security Council has been mandating new types of missions, such as helping combat Ebola in Liberia, but has made an argument that limits need to be set. Robust interventions such as those in Somalia in 1993 or the DRC in 2013 with the FIB should be exceptional. As peacekeepers become the targets of terrorists in Mali, the experts opined that UN operations are unsuited to counter-terrorism missions.

But the panel is not making a case for withdrawal from the world's problems. The challenge is to match mandates with capabilities.

Protection mandates must be realistic, it says, and recommends that they be integrated as part of a wider political approach to resolve the underlying conflict.

In an echo of Brahimi, its makes the case for the Secretariat to be frank with the Security Council about what resources it needs to do these difficult jobs.

Member States like Indonesia should provide more resources, including peacekeepers, to carry out these complex mandates, including protecting civilians.

"When a protection crisis occurs, UN personnel cannot stand by as civilians are threatened or killed. They must use every tool available to them to protect civilians under imminent threat. Each and every peacekeeper — military, police and civilian — must pass this test when crisis presents itself," the panel stated.

Indonesia by becoming a more prominent contributor to peace operations is exposing itself to greater burdens of responsibility and in the future graver moral dilemmas. UN peacekeeping is not all about getting a promotion, international experience, or coming home with some extra spending money from saving UN per diems. It can be about protecting civilians in ambiguous situations like civil wars where there may be not yet any peace to keep.

The UN may be trying to limit its exposure to war fighting scenarios, but it does not make peacekeeping an easy job. Whether as a civilian official, riot police, helicopter pilot, combat engineer, or rifle-bearing infantryman, the panel makes it clear that national caveats or other exceptions cannot release peacekeepers from a sacred duty when deployed to difficult peace operations. The ghosts of Rwanda and Srebrenica still haunt the international community. The protection of civilians, it says, is a core obligation of the UN.

This article was originally published by *The Jakarta Post* on July 5 2015

*Jim Della-Giacoma is the Deputy Director of the Center on International Cooperation at NYU. | Twitter: @jimdella*

© BROOKINGS/UN

# CAN U.N. PEACEKEEPERS FIGHT TERRORISTS?

by Richard Gowan

**BLUE HELMET MISSIONS LACK THE SPECIFIC EQUIPMENT, INTELLIGENCE, LOGISTICS, CAPABILITIES AND SPECIALIZED MILITARY PREPARATION REQUIRED TO HANDLE VIOLENT EXTREMISTS.**

Can peacekeepers fight terrorists? Last Friday, Islamist militants killed thirty Burundian soldiers serving with the African Union's mission in Somalia (AMISOM). The incident was overshadowed by the news of further terrorist attacks in Tunisia, Kuwait, and France. But it is an ugly reminder that multilateral peace operations, often relying on poorly equipped troops from developing countries, are in the front line of the battle against Islamist extremism across North Africa and the Middle East.

AMISOM has, by some estimates, lost over 3,000 personnel in its struggle to stabilize Somalia (the AU disputes this figure, but is cagey about its losses). In Mali, Islamist insurgents have waged an effective guerrilla campaign against African troops serving with the United Nations. In Syria, the Al-Nusra Front has taken time off from its fight against the Assad regime to take U.N troops hostage on the Golan Heights.

At a time when the U.S. and its NATO allies are wary of putting boots on the ground, the African, Asian, and Latin American forces that make up most multilateral peacekeeping forces will almost certainly be asked to take on an even greater role in countering terrorism in future. U.N veterans find this profoundly disturbing. An expert panel convened by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon reported earlier this month that blue helmet missions "lack the specific equipment, intelligence, logistics, capabilities and specialized military preparation required" to handle violent extremists.

This is one of those pieces of policy advice that is right but liable to be ignored in a crisis. U.N officials have talked about sending blue helmets to Libya and have plans for a post-conflict mission of over 10,000 soldiers in Syria, should it ever be needed.

As my colleague **Jim Della-Giacoma notes**, "whether they plan for it or not, U.N peace operations know too well that they operate in places where terrorists are present.The organization once thought its impartiality would be its shield, but since the 2003 bombing of its Baghdad headquarters, the U.N increasingly finds itself a target. The way this issue is framed in the report suggests that the U.N Secretariat, its bodies and its Member States can choose whether to cross this line. But the challenge of countering violent extremism is not going away, particularly in large swathes of Africa, Asia, and the Middle East."

## YOU GET WHAT YOU PAY FOR

UN peace operations, and regional alternatives such as AMISOM, are relatively cheap crisis management tools. As the Global Review of Peace Operations, a new website launched by the **Center on International Cooperation**, shows, the U.N has over 100,000 soldiers and police in the field—a record—at an annual cost of under $9 billion. That is a lot but vastly less than it would take to fund U.S. or NATO forces.

So it is tempting to ask these largely non-Western forces to take on increased risks. African governments are keen to mount more robust operations against regional threats such as Al-Qaida in the Maghreb, Al-Shabaab in Somalia and Boko Haram in northern Nigeria. African officials are critical of the UN's caution and have heartily supported France's robust military responses to the crises in Mali and the Central African Republic. There is likely to be a further blurring between peacekeeping, stabilization missions, and counter-terrorism operations in Africa—most likely under a mix of U.N and regional mandates, whatever the UN's qualms.

Yet this could also be a recipe for disaster if the peacekeepers continue to lack the specialized equipment and training highlighted by Ban Ki-moon's panel. In Mali, for example, U.N units deployed without the kit or knowledge needed to handle roadside bombs, leaving their convoys highly vulnerable to the insurgents. This is symptomatic of a far broader set of capacity gaps—including shortages of military helicopters, medical units, and engineers—that plague many U.N. and AU operations.

If the U.S. and its allies want these operations to play a substantial part in countering terrorist groups, they need to give them greater direct and indirect support. NATO members including the Netherlands and Nordic countries have sent intelligence experts and commandos to Mali, although this relatively small presence has not been enough to offset the mission's wider deficiencies. The U.N hopes that increasingly capable Asian militaries, including China, will send more units—but the demand for high-end contingents and assets continues to outstrip what is available.

The Obama administration has said that it wants to rectify this problem, although not through sending soldiers of its own (the United States currently has 80 personnel in U.N missions worldwide, just behind Zimbabwe.) This September, the president will convene other world leaders for a special meeting on boosting peace operations in New York. Helping the blue helmets may sound like a fairly benign legacy project for Obama—but it is also an important of the global drive to contain international terrorism.

This article was originally published by **Brookings** on June 30 2015

*Richard Gowan is a non-resident fellow at the Center on International Cooperation at NYU, where he was previously research director. He is also a fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations, teaches conflict resolution at Columbia's School of International and Public Affairs, and writes a weekly column ("Diplomatic Fallout") for World Politics Review. | Twitter: @RichardGowan1*

# COHERENCE AND COOPERATION

©NATO

# THE HAZARDS OF THE PECULIAR UN-NATO RELATIONSHIP

by Yf Reykers

**WHILE BOTH THE UN AND NATO SHARE A "COMMITMENT TO MAINTAINING INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY", REITERATED DURING A MEETING BETWEEN BAN KI-MOON AND JENS STOLTENBERG IN THIS YEAR'S UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY, THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO ORGANISATIONS HAS ALWAYS BEEN PECULIAR.**

More than two decades ago, the UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali in **An Agenda for Peace** highlighted the necessity of regional support "to lighten the burden of the Council". He called it "a matter of delegation". One organization that has occasionally acted upon authorization of the UN Security Council (UNSC) is the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Council (NATO NAC). While both the UN and NATO share a "commitment to maintaining international peace and security", reiterated during a meeting between Ban Ki-Moon and Jens Stoltenberg in this year's UN General Assembly, the relationship between the two organisations has always been peculiar.

The many **reports** and **debates** where the UN addresses its relationship with regional organizations rarely mention NATO. This is somewhat surprising for two reasons. First, the UN-NATO relationship is a lopsided one that mainly benefits NATO. If regional action is indeed "a matter of delegation", one wonders who in this relationship is actually delegating to whom. The Security Council, in its authorizations of NATO-led interventions, rarely explicitly delegates to NATO. For instance, in UNSC Resolution 1244, which is the legal framework for NATO's KFOR operation in Kosovo, it authorized "Member States and relevant international organizations to establish the international security presence in Kosovo".

The second reason touches upon a problem that reaches far beyond this single relationship. While UNSC delegation to regional organizations has long been uncontested, the current divisions within the Security Council have led to increased criticisms on the lack of control. Accusations of mandate violations, such as those in the aftermath of NATO's 2011 intervention in Libya, have clearly highlighted the UNSC's limited oversight of the operations it authorizes.

## UN-NATO: WHO'S DELEGATING TO WHOM?

Since 1992, the UN-NATO relationship has been stretched both geographically and thematically. While originally established for collective defence purposes, the gradual expansion of NATO's "shared commitment" with the UN in a broad range of tasks was illustrative of the organization's search for a new raison d'être following the end of bipolarity. In doing so, NATO has also moved beyond the Euro-Atlantic region.

In the field of peace enforcement, the UN provided authorization for NATO-led operations in the Balkans (IFOR, SFOR and KFOR), Afghanistan (ISAF), and ultimately in Libya (Operation Unified Protector). Likewise, NATO also provided training missions in Iraq (NTM-I). NATO's thematic expansion became most obvious in its deployment of a relief mission following the 2005 earthquake in Pakistan, its support to the African Union's AMIS mission in the Darfur region, and its escorts of vessels in the Gulf of Aden.

In the UN-NATO **Joint Declaration** of 2008, following the 2007 signature of the UN-EU Joint Declaration and the UN-EU Joint Statement, both sides have showed commitment to further cooperation and to formalizing their relationship in several interesting areas including information-sharing, capacity-building, lessons learned, planning, and operational coordination and support. But it took years to sign a document that in the end remained vague in content and strategy, and which has received little to no follow-up. Since its signature, information exchange is the only area that has been formalized by the creation of civilian liaison offices and regular meetings of both Secretary-Generals.

In their **meeting** in the margins of this year's UN General Assembly, the two Secretary-Generals once again stressed the need for closer cooperation between both organizations, but one might wonder what would be the next crisis in which they will actually cooperate. Moreover, with the exception of NATO's support for UN disaster relief in Pakistan and its support for the African Union in Darfur, it is doubtful whether this is in fact a truly cooperative relationship.

It can be argued that NATO still benefits most from the relationship. For instance, in operations involving the use of force, UNSC resolutions provide the required legal coverage and political legitimacy (at least in the early stages of its actions) to NATO's operations. In addition, it has been argued that NATO's peace support activities in Afghanistan would hardly have been possible without the support of the UN's specialised agencies.

## MANDATE COMPLIANCE

**Commentators** have frequently indicated a problem with NATO "hopping in, and hopping out" of the UN Charter. NATO has always resisted being seen as one of many regional organizations falling under **Chapter VIII** of the UN Charter, a position primarily inspired by its reluctance to abide by the information requirement in Article 54:

"The Security Council shall at all times be kept fully informed of activities undertaken or in contemplation under regional arrangements or by regional agencies for the maintenance of international peace and security."

NATO's resistance to Article 54 makes its actions difficult to control for those UNSC members that are not part of the North-Atlantic Alliance. As a result, the history of the UN-NATO relationship has strongly been characterised by discussions on NATO's degree of mandate compliance. Such discussions are particularly pressing in instances where NATO implements mandates that deal with its key expertise: the use of force.

> **AN OVERARCHING SOLUTION WOULD BE TO CRAFT MORE SPECIFIC GUIDELINES THAT ARE APPLICABLE TO A BROAD RANGE OF ORGANIZATIONS, INCLUDING NATO. THAT SHOULD START WITH AN INWARD-LOOKING APPROACH, ADDRESSING THE UN'S OWN CAPACITY TO MONITOR THE OPERATIONS IT AUTHORIZES.**

The most recent example is NATO's 2011 Operation Unified Protector in Libya. UNSC Resolution 1973 authorized the use of all necessary means "to protect civilians and civilian populated areas under threat of attack" (Operative Paragraph 4) and "to enforce compliance with the ban on flights" (Operative Paragraph 8). However, accusations of mission creep quickly followed NATO's deployment. Interestingly, these were voiced far beyond Russia, even among NATO's own members such as Italy. Such accusations are not surprising given that NATO retains full political and operational control over operations decided by the NAC. Once having received UNSC authorization, NATO is de jure sanctioned by a UNSC Resolution while de facto autonomous in its operation. As one high-level NATO diplomat told me on the matter of getting a NATO operation authorized by the UNSC, the UN should be aware that "once you fire a shot, you cannot get it back into the gun".

Operations such as the one in Libya are useful tools in blaming and shaming strategies. **Jim Della-Giacoma** has argued on the Global Peace Operations Review that "with the U.S. and Russia once again using the organization [UNSC] as a proxy battlefield, the 'challenges to implementation' are numerous." In order to minimize the leeway for such diplomatic battles, these operations require careful decision-making. Even more crucial is a mechanism that would allow the UNSC to better monitor the operations it authorizes. Discussion of the capacities to control non-UN led operations raises another problem, however, as this requires consensus within the UNSC.

## FLAWED MONITORING CAPABILITIES

The Libya experience seems to have sparked awareness among several UN member states on the importance of keeping the UNSC fully informed at all times. This was recently reiterated by the Brazilian Permanent Representative Antonio Patriota during the UN General Assembly's **Informal Dialogue** on the Responsibility to Protect. Patriota stated that "we have a right to expect full accountability from those to whom authority is granted to resort to force".

But the UNSC's capacity to effectively control the operations it authorizes is in fact rather limited. In theory, when delegating interventions to non UN-led coalitions or other organizations such as NATO, the Council's control capacities are limited to the reporting procedures included in the authorizing resolutions. In cases of a regional organization's involvement, this implies a referral to Article 54 of the UN Charter. But often this is merely treated as a procedural detail, indicating a huge gap still exists between **theory and practice**.

NATO's Libya intervention illustrated this in the strongest terms, and should be a thought-provoking case in that regard. When authorizing the creation of a no-fly zone, UNSC Resolution 1973 stated that "the Member States concerned shall inform the Secretary-General" and requested the Secretary-General "to report to the Council within 7 days and every month thereafter on the implementation of this Resolution". Although Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in December 2011 **voiced** the recurring argument that "This military operation done by the NATO forces was strictly within [Resolution] 1973", the accusations that followed illustrate the monitoring problem the UNSC is facing. While the reporting provisions included in Resolution 1973 may have been the result of diplomatic efforts to gain the broadest support possible, it seems that the drafters were unaware of the consequences of these provisions.

Coming back to the UN General Assembly's **Informal Dialogue** on the Responsibility to Protect, Antonio Patriota urged an introduction of a briefing system similar to that in peacekeeping operations, as well as the establishment of expert panels to monitor these interventions. How this might actually look in practice remains unclear. But what is certain is that, although numerous UNSC Resolutions oblige the executing coalition or organization to report to the UN Secretary-General, the SG does not have the means and structures to deal with this information in a constructive/operational fashion. So even if the information obligation in NATO's Libya intervention had been met, it is highly doubtful whether the Secretary-General had the structure, the staff and the expertise to thoroughly assess such military information. Regrettably, the Libya legacy has not (yet) led the UN – either at the level of member states or within the Secretariat – to deeper reflection in that regard.

## WAYS FORWARD: REVITALIZING THE MILITARY STAFF COMMITTEE?

Is there any way forward for the UN on these issues? An overarching solution would be to craft more specific guidelines that are applicable to a broad range of organizations, including NATO. That should start with an inward-looking approach, addressing the UN's own capacity to monitor the operations it authorizes. This issue was raised in the recently published **HIPPO-report**: "When the Security Council authorizes non-UN forces, it should establish requirements for reporting and accountability to the Council." A problem however arises when dealing with operations that primarily focus on the use of force. Military officials shudder at the idea of being subjected to UNSC decision-making, as more political oversight might obstruct operational effectiveness. Yet those concerns should not stand in the way of an increased accountability for such operations.

Such accountability could be achieved by revitalizing the largely dormant Military Staff Committee. Although established as a subsidiary body of the UNSC, the Military Staff Committee is at present not doing what was envisioned through **Article 47** of the UN Charter, i.e. to provide advice and assistance to the UNSC on all questions dealing with military requirements and the employment and command of forces put at its disposal.

The greatest advantage of a revitalized Military Staff Committee would be that it could guarantee follow-up of the reporting requirement and oversee operational accountability of non-UN-led operations. This could also have benefits beyond the subdomain of military interventions. It could provide the P5 with a means for more coordinated exchange of ideas among their military advisors, in order to bring about more realistic and achievable mandates for UN-led peace operations.

## THE TWO SECRETARY-GENERALS ONCE AGAIN STRESSED THE NEED FOR CLOSER COOPERATION BETWEEN BOTH ORGANIZATIONS, BUT ONE MIGHT WONDER WHAT WOULD BE THE NEXT CRISIS IN WHICH THEY WILL ACTUALLY COOPERATE

However, reinvigorating the Military Staff Committee is a decision that has to be taken by the UNSC itself, which is currently divided. Adding to the uncertainty of reaching such a decision, the P3 members will always keep their NATO membership in mind. And this brings us back to the peculiar UN-NATO relationship. Taken together, all of these considerations lead to the conclusion that installing an independent expert panel for guaranteeing monitoring, as recently proposed by Brazil, might not be a bad idea after all.

## A CHALLENGE FOR THE NEXT UN SECRETARY-GENERAL?

What is clear is that the peculiar UN-NATO relationship reveals much wider challenges – not only to the relationship itself, but also to the UNSC's position. It goes without saying that these challenges will probably not be solved in the coming year. But the next UN Secretary-General could take a step in the right direction by deducing an agenda from the 2008 UN-NATO Joint Declaration for implementing aspects that may benefit the work of the Council or the Secretariat.

Doing this will require a strong figure, one who is able to shift some of the position's weight from merely being the chief executive officer. It will be a challenging endeavour, not only because the UN-NATO relationship highlights problems that are at the heart of the UNSC's functioning. NATO's manoeuvring room has largely been a deliberate choice by its key allies, those with a strong hand in the selection of the new Secretary-General. It remains to be seen what the effect will be on the UN-NATO relationship if that new UN Secretary-General comes from Eastern Europe.

*Yf Reykers is a PhD fellow of the Research Foundation – Flanders (FWO). He has been conducting his research at the Leuven International and European Studies (LINES) Institute since October 2013. His research focuses on the relationship between the United Nations Security Council and regional organisations in peace and security related dossiers. | Twitter: @YfReykers*

©UN

# TRIANGULAR COOPERATION - KEY TO ALL

by Alexandra Novosseloff

## WITHOUT COOPERATION BETWEEN THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL, THE UN SECRETARIAT AND THOSE COUNTRIES CONTRIBUTING TROOPS, POLICE, STAFF OFFICERS, AND MILITARY OBSERVERS, THE SYSTEM WILL NOT WORK EFFECTIVELY.

Triangular cooperation is an idea that has been around for many years. It is supported by many, feared by some, but so far it has never been implemented. The concept has now been resurrected by the **High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) report**.

It is the key for all peacekeeping operations. Without cooperation between the UN Security Council, the UN Secretariat and those countries contributing troops, police, staff officers, and military observers, the system will not work effectively.

As the Security Council creates operations in less secure situations and pushes major contributors to take more risks, these contributors are demanding a greater say in how the Security Council shapes peacekeeping mandates. They are the ones implementing dangerous missions, and they pay the higher human price when their comrades are killed, while those who control the Security Council "only" receive the bill for these operations.

This debate has been ongoing for some time, but it took on new relevance with the deployment of the Force Intervention Brigade within the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) and difficult missions in Mali and the Central African Republic that have stretched peacekeeping to its limits. The Security Council has dealt with this issue in an episodic manner over the past 20 years, de facto letting the gap with troop contributing countries (TCCs) widen. The question is whether this situation is sustainable when the UN's resolutions are challenged by spoilers on the ground, and also - even more worrying - by those who are supposed to implement them.

## ALWAYS WISHED FOR, NEVER IMPLEMENTED

Since the late 1990s, the issue of a strengthened triangular cooperation has regularly surfaced. Everybody agrees on its necessity but nobody is able to overcome the status quo or apparent inertia. The process generated by the HIPPO report offers one more opportunity to move forward with concrete proposals that would serve the interests of all parties.

In 2000, the **Brahimi report** advocated for "the establishment of ad hoc subsidiary organs of the Council", as "Member States that do commit formed military units to an operation should be invited to consult with the members of the Security Council during mandate formulation; troop contributors should also be invited to attend Secretariat briefings of the Security Council pertaining to crises that affect the safety and security of mission personnel or to a change or reinterpretation of the mandate regarding the use of force".

Following the report, **Resolution 1327** (November 2000) "underlined the importance of an improved system of consultations among the troop-contributing countries, the Secretary-General and the Security Council, in order to foster a common understanding of the situation on the ground, of the mission's mandate and of its implementation". It suggested "the holding of private meetings" which could be arranged at the request of TCCs or police contributing countries (PCCs). In January 2001 the Council then **established** a **Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations** aiming not to "replace the private meetings with the troop-contributing countries", but regularly including them in its debates. However, real engagement with TCCs is made more difficult because this Working Group only meets irregularly, and in a way that is not always directly connected to the work of the Security Council. These issues were singled out by a **Challenges Forum Report** in 2015.

On April 2001, the Security Council adopted the cornerstone **Resolution 1353** that issued a "Statement of principles on cooperation with troop-contributing countries" by which it "underlined that consultations between the Security Council, the Secretariat and troop-contributing countries should enhance the ability of the Security Council to make appropriate, effective and timely decisions in fulfilling its responsibilities". The format of such consultation meetings, which could potentially involve agencies and host countries alike, proved to be problematic for meaningful exchanges - and in fact, these meetings never took place. Instead, the UN Secretariat convened "TCC meetings" when it needed to look for contributors to new operations or in times of crisis.

## CONSULTATION BEFORE PARTICIPATION

In 2008, the **Capstone Doctrine** considered that "sustained consultations with TCCs/PCCs and other contributing countries at all stages of the planning and decision-making process are critical to the success of any UN peacekeeping operation". It also recognized that "since UN peacekeeping operations would not be possible without the participation of contributing countries, it is critical that every effort be made to ensure that they are fully consulted on any decisions that may affect their personnel on the ground".

One year later, the **New Horizon document** advocated for "a renewed global partnership among the Security Council, the contributing Member States and the Secretariat" with the objective of establishing "a clear peacekeeping strategy that is matched with resources for implementation". It recommended developing "more meaningful consultation" between all these stakeholders "on proposed tasks affecting their personnel, before planning documents are issued".

During that new reform process launched by the "New Horizon" agenda, the Turkish presidency of the Council in June 2009 organized **a meeting** to support the establishment of a "mutual, transparent and interactive dialogue". In August 2009, the Security Council welcomed, in a **presidential statement**, "practical suggestions to deepen such consultations", recognizing "that through their experience and expertise, troop and police contributing countries can greatly contribute to effective planning, decision-making and deployment of peacekeeping operations".

> ## TRIANGULAR COOPERATION IS A REFORM THAT IS FREE OF CHARGE - INDEED, IT EVEN INCREASES THE COST-EFFICIENCY OF PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS.

From 2010 onwards, the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C-34) included a section on triangular cooperation in its annual reports. In **2011**, it stressed in particular "the need to regularly assess, through consultations among the troop- and police-contributing countries, the Secretariat and the Council, the strength and composition of the peacekeeping operations and the implementation of their mandates, with a view to making the necessary adjustments, where appropriate, according to progress achieved or changing circumstances on the ground".

Finally, the HIPPO report stated that "the Security Council should institutionalize a framework to engage troop- and police-contributing countries and the Secretariat early in the mandate formulation process". There, "the purpose should be a dialogue with political and military representatives that ensures a meeting of minds between the Secretariat and potential contributors on required capabilities, resulting in commitments to deliver on the mandate and concept of operations".

The Secretary-General's report underlined that a "sustained dialogue between the Council, the Secretariat and contributors is essential for shared understanding of appropriate responses and their implications for the mandate and conduct of a peace operation". The Secretary-General considered that such consultations "should begin before mission establishment". Consultations were linked to the proposal for a two-step approach in creating peacekeeping, i.e. to draft the resolution but to adopt only when sufficient troops are committed. Such an approach would enforce consultation prior to finalizing a resolution.

## HOW WOULD IT WORK?

Much has been said about the usefulness of triangular cooperation. Many meetings are arranged between these various actors, either at the initiative of the Secretariat or of the Security Council, depending on the particular operation. But this activity is not taking place in a regular, systematic and institutionalized manner.

As pointed out already in 2009 by Fatemeh Ziai in a very comprehensive **study** on the topic, TCCs generally feel that there is a "lack of meaningful consultations"; "there is a feeling that dealing with TCCs and scheduling meetings just creates more work for the Council and especially for the Secretariat. As a result, TCCs feel that consultations have been pro forma and formulaic, with no opportunity for an interactive discussion".

How could an "institutionalized framework" as envisioned by the HIPPO report be realized? Past proposals have demonstrated that such consultations, viewed by some Council members with great reluctance, should be held behind-the-scenes (at least for a period of time) and restricted. But they should also be regular, adapting to the timing of each and every peacekeeping mission. Some have suggested "groups of friends" being able to fill the gap, but these seem to be too ad hoc to have the required weight.

Strengthened triangular cooperation could be formed around the following contours:

**Regular consultations:** These should take the form of regular informal and private meetings between the Security Council, the Secretariat and the major TCCs. Meetings should be first and foremost informal in order to facilitate constructive dialogue. This would also counter any fears by the Council (mainly the P5) that this might encroach on its decision-making prerogatives. The Council members could retain their space to maneuver, even when they need to take into account the major concerns of TCCs. The entire process would allow the initiation of a regular working relationship between these three actors.

**Meetings before mandates**: These should be held before the renewal of the mandate of a mission, before and after a major strategic review has been conducted by the Secretariat, and when a major mission-related crisis occurs. Sufficient time should be afforded to all stakeholders to come to these meetings with appropriate feedback and input.

**Experts, not permanent reps:** Meetings should be held at the expert level rather than at the permanent representatives' level, or their deputies, in order to avoid any "precooked" speeches. These meetings should be political/military, since most of the time, the military component is at stake. However, during times when stakes are higher, these meetings should be held at a more senior level in order to enable effective decisions.

**Operations, not strategy:** Meetings will need to be as concrete as possible, not merely talking about a grand strategy, but also looking at the daily operational challenges of the TCCs.

**Top Ten contributors by mission:** Meetings should involve the primary troop or police contributors specific to that mission, since they are taking the main risks in the field. Ten is a good number to allow a focused discussion. Some flexibility would of course be required when adjusting the exact number of attendees, but the meetings should not be transformed into fora where nobody would be willing to talk openly.

**Presidency before pen-holder:** Meetings should be convened by the Security Council, and in particular by the presidency in charge of the month. Meetings should not necessarily be convened by the pen-holder of the draft resolution on that specific mission: it would be preferable to integrate those involved in the regular work of the Security Council as a whole. Meetings could therefore be held in the informal consultations room near the Council's chamber. The Secretariat could present the political-security situation, the penholder of that resolution could talk about the ongoing negotiation process, and major TCCs could share their concerns for their troops with direct feedback coming from the field.

Such regular and informal meetings should create a sense of common interest between all stakeholders of peacekeeping, enabling them to reach a common vision on how best to implement specific operations. Of course, these meetings would be of greatest benefit if everyone came to the table with a constructive mood and the objective of improving the efficiency of peacekeeping operations.

Member States need to ensure that their representatives in New York are fully and effectively prepared for consultations with the Security Council and the Secretariat. As pointed out by Fatemeh Ziai, "a proper chain of information from the contingents on the ground to the capital and then on to New York needs to be developed or improved". The Secretariat would need to follow up in a coordinated manner with all requests or issues raised in these meetings. A strategic dialogue between the major countries of the Council and the major troop contributors would also need to be undertaken in order to give political weight to these consultations held in New York.

## WHY IS THIS IN THE INTEREST OF ALL ACTORS?

What are the biggest incentives for the Council, the Secretariat and the TCCs to move forward on building triangular cooperation?

*It is key to the Security Council as a whole.* The Security Council clearly has no interest in creating or renewing mandates that would be challenged on the ground, as was the case in 2013 with the creation of the Force Intervention Brigade in Democratic Republic of the Congo. In that situation, several TCCs openly declared that they did not want to take part in this new reality created for MONUSCO. Major TCCs that are also members of the Council will rarely oppose the consensus. But they can counter the Council in a more subtle manner on the ground, refusing orders given by the mission leadership after the adoption or renewal of a resolution.

As **Richard Gowan and others** explained: "not only the Security Council but also troop contributors have an effective veto over the conduct of UN operations in dangerous situations. The troop contributors' 'veto' is not, of course, a formal legal instrument.  It is, instead, their power to block or undermine the Council's will by controlling the supply and behavior of peacekeepers for individual missions". Indeed, this is an unhealthy path for the Council and for peacekeeping operations in general.

The Council cannot work on these issues in isolation from the implementers of its resolutions. It has historically had a tendency to be too focused on its New York-based negotiating process, rather than on the conditions on the ground. This cannot work any longer in a world of quickly evolving threats, where peacekeepers are becoming targets and the financial resources of the international community are growing scarce. Such situations damage the credibility and authority of the Council vis-à-vis host nations and spoilers, and are likely to create more difficulties down the road. These situations also lead TCCs to move the political battle of influence to other fora such as the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C-34) and the Fifth Committee (which determines the budget of every operation). This is also unsustainable for the Council in terms of its authority within the UN system.

*It is key to TCCs.* Through increased engagement with the Council, TCCs would feel greater responsibility for the outcome of peacekeeping missions on the ground. Their presence on the ground would also afford information that would be useful for the Council when assessing the renewal of a mandate. As the Secretary-General stated in its report on the HIPPO, such meetings "would give the Council an opportunity to obtain insights on challenges and opportunities entailed in mandating certain tasks and in generating required capabilities under specific timeframes".

*It is key to the Secretariat.* More engagement between the Security Council and TCCs would allow for more effective results on the ground. Orders given by mission leadership would be better followed through. Caveats will remain, being inherent to any military operation, but they would be less hidden, thus easing the task of the Force Commander in the field. Stronger triangular cooperation will also lead to a stronger UN chain of command: a Security Council more attuned to the challenges on the ground is more likely to hear the Secretariat's concerns. These meetings could then also be used by the Secretariat to validate planned compacts with host nations.

## WHY ARE WE WAITING?

As I have **advocated**, the strengthening of triangular cooperation should be one of the main outcomes of this reform process initiated by the HIPPO. The gap between the Security Council, the Secretariat and the TCCs has become too wide. Repercussions are visible on the ground. There is a political battle being fought between those who decide and pay, and those who implement. This struggle for power and control over peacekeeping operations is damaging the system more than the protagonists may think. It is hurting the authority and credibility of the principal organ dealing with peace and security, and it is hindering the tools it creates to mitigate some of the most complex crises in the world. Delaying forward movement on this issue can only worsen the situation. Peacekeeping is a partnership. All partners, if serious about peacekeeping, have to make efforts toward better coherence and efficiency.

Such initiative on triangular cooperation could be undertaken by members of the P5. For example, why not by France and the United Kingdom following the spirit of their **2009 initiative on Strengthening Peacekeeping?** Alternatively, it could be achieved by interested non-permanent members that wish to improve the working methods of the Council. Institutionalizing triangular cooperation could follow the adoption of a presidential statement or, even more effectively, a resolution that would commit all parties in a more concrete way. Triangular cooperation is a reform that is free of charge - indeed, it even increases the cost-efficiency of peacekeeping operations. Ultimately, all these efforts go both ways: those who contribute in troops need more say in the way peacekeeping operations are conceived and decided upon. Those who decide and pay need to do more to contribute.

*Dr. Alexandra Novosseloff is Senior Visiting Fellow at the **Center on International Cooperation at NYU** | **Twitter: @DeSachenka***

©WIKIPEDIA

# AUSTRALIA'S FALSE START ON PEACEKEEPING: A POST-SUMMIT REVIEW

by Peter Nadin

**THE LACK OF COMMITMENT UNDERLINES AUSTRALIA'S PREFERENCE FOR CHECKBOOK PEACEKEEPING: AUSTRALIA IS THE 13TH LARGEST FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTOR TO PEACEKEEPING INITIATIVES, BUT ONLY THE 81ST RANKED POLICE AND MILITARY CONTRIBUTOR.**

Much of the mainstream coverage of this year's UN General Assembly leaders' week focused on Putin and Obama's *tete-a-tete* on Syria, as well as the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals.

On the sidelines of the GA, President Obama convened a leaders' summit on peacekeeping. The summit was born of a US recognition that peacekeeping is under extreme stress – weighted down in the **quagmires** of CAR, Mali, and South Sudan. Western countries have vanished without a trace and left the global south to do the dirty work. The division of labour between those providing the 'treasure' and those providing the 'blood' is not only unacceptable, it is untenable.

The summit was designed to act as a pressure valve. On paper, it delivered. **Some 50 countries pledged a total of approximately 40,000 personnel**, an impressive surge in the numbers of peacekeepers. The peacekeeping stalwarts of the global south still came through with the most substantial pledges: Rwanda, Pakistan, Uruguay, Bangladesh and Ethiopia all pledged infantry battalions. New and emerging players such as Indonesia and Colombia also pledged to do more.

The biggest story of the summit was almost certainly China's pledge of an 8000-strong standby force. China is currently the largest P5 contributor, with just over 3,000 personnel deployed. If ever fully deployed, this added boost would likely place China among the top contributors overall.

Indeed, the problem with pledges is that they are less solemn promises and more aspirational goalposts. An informal system for holding countries to their pledges, some of which are quite vague, will be necessary. Here, US leadership will be again required to corral and cajole.

## SO WHAT DID AUSTRALIA OFFER?

The core of the Australian pledge was spelt out by Australia's foreign minister, Julie Bishop: "We will use our C-130 Hercules and C-17 Globemaster aircraft to provide strategic airlift support to UN peacekeeping operations in crisis situations, wherever and whenever we can." In January of this year, a Royal Australian Air Force C-17 was offered to carry "**critical equipment and supplies**" to the UN's beleaguered mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). It is likely that this one-off commitment was used as the model for Australia's pledge.

Australia also committed itself to helping prepare its neighbours for the rigours of modern peacekeeping. A particular emphasis was placed on defeating "the scourge of improvised explosive devices." No mention was made of a potential police contribution,

## WESTERN COUNTRIES HAVE VANISHED WITHOUT A TRACE AND LEFT THE GLOBAL SOUTH TO DO THE DIRTY WORK.

despite the fact that Australian Federal Police boasts a highly capable International Deployment Group. Sweden, by contrast, has pledged to deploy 1% of its entire national police force to UN operations.

If Australia is a "reliable contributor," as Julie Bishop has proclaimed, then it is reliably poor one. Only 48 Australian personnel are deployed to UN peacekeeping missions. When all is said and done, Australia's pledged contribution is unlikely to see a spike in the numbers of Australians actually deployed to UN missions. The number is likely to remain fixed below 50.

This lack of commitment underlines Australia's preference for checkbook peacekeeping: Australia is the 13th largest financial contributor to peacekeeping initiatives, but only the 81st ranked police and military contributor. In fact, Australia ranks below Liberia, a country recovering from civil war and also the host of a UN peacekeeping mission, the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL).

Much has been made of **Australia's history in peacekeeping**. Australia has been particularly strong in the Asia Pacific region, supporting UN missions in Indonesia (1947), Cambodia (1991), and East Timor (1999), as well as non-UN missions in the Solomon

Islands and Bougainville. The 'only in our region' argument is weak. Surely Australia has a role beyond its own region? If the answer is no, then Australia is a profoundly limited middle power. History suggests otherwise. Throughout the 1990s, Australia sent peacekeepers to Mozambique, Rwanda, Somalia, Namibia and the Former Yugoslavia. The largest contributions included 900 engineers to the UN Transitional Assistance Group (UNTAG) in Namibia and an entire Battalion Group to Somalia as part of United Taskforce (UNITAF).

If Australia wants to sit on the **Security Council in 2029-30**, making decisions about peacekeeping mandates, then it must genuinely recommit to the Council's core business: peacekeeping. The status quo paints Australia as arrogant and indifferent to the demands of modern peace operations.

## SO WHAT SHOULD AUSTRALIA BE DOING ON PEACEKEEPING? THE SHORT ANSWER IS MORE.

Finland, Australia's potential challenger for a spot on the Security Council in 2029-30, is one of the strongest European contributors with a total of 337 personnel deployed. At the 28 September summit, the Finns pledged extra support: an amphibious task unit, Special Forces, military observers, police, and a Chemical Biological Radiological Nuclear lab and training capacity. Finland's commitment follows Jim Della-Giacoma's recent suggestion that the UN needs "**small units of high quality**." Australia could have followed suit by providing a few select niche capabilities. The airlift commitment is a good start. But it falls short of a genuine recommitment.

The continual invocation of Australia's proud peacekeeping history is beginning to ring hollow. The government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and Australian Defence Force must now ask the obvious question: what is Australia's peacekeeping future?

*Peter Nadin is an independent researcher based in Sydney, Australia. He is the author along with Patrick Cammaert and Vesselin Popovski of '**Spoiler Groups and UN Peacekeeping**' (London: IISS/Routledge, 2015) | **Twitter**: **@PeteNadin***

©SANOGO/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

# EUROPEAN MILITARY CONTRIBUTIONS TO UN PEACE OPERATIONS IN AFRICA | MAXIMIZING STRATEGIC IMPACT

by Richard Gowan

**THIS PAPER REFERS TO BOTH THE HIPPO REPORT AND BAN'S RESPONSE, AND MAKES CONCRETE POLICY PROPOSALS ABOUT HOW EUROPEAN STATES CAN BUILD ON THESE PAPERS IN MILITARY TERMS.**

## INTRODUCTION

European forces have played a very limited military role in United Nations (UN) peace operations in Africa over the last two decades. In some periods, European personnel have accounted for less than 2% of the blue helmets on the continent.[2] Yet there is now new momentum among NATO and European Union (EU) members to play a more significant part in UN operations – although still on a selective basis and through focused, light deployments – largely resulting from concerns over the spread of violent extremism and unregulated migration. This paper considers how these strategic dilemmas affect current UN operations, European contributions to those missions and cooperation with African governments. It then addresses three related sets of policy questions:

1. Can the UN define a strategic/operational concept for containing or mitigating (as opposed to fighting) extremist violence in Africa?

2. What specific roles can European forces play in implementing such a concept?

3. How can European governments and militaries most effectively partner with increasingly assertive African counterparts within the UN framework?

The paper draws on recent research by the Center on International Cooperation (CIC) and other organizations on current and recent European experiences of UN missions in Africa. It argues that, by offering both advanced military assets and expertise on tackling asymmetric threats, European militaries can help the UN tackle violent extremism. This will, however, mean addressing sensitive issues – such as the linkages between peacekeeping, stabilization operations and peace enforcement – that remain problematic despite the recent High-Level Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) and follow-up work by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.[3]

This paper refers to both the HIPPO report and Ban's response, and makes concrete policy proposals about how European states can build on these papers in military terms. However, it is not a comprehensive review of either document, and does not address many of the important non-military issues (such as conflict prevention and institutional reforms at UN headquarters) that they raise. Its goal is to identify concepts and opportunities that European armed forces can use to engage more effectively in UN peace operations in Africa, in light of Europe's security concerns.

## EUROPE, AFRICAN SECURITY AND THE UN

Large areas of Africa, notably the Sahel and Horn of Africa, are regions of growing strategic concern for European policy-makers. The primary reason for this is the presence of Islamist extremist groups such as al-Shabaab, Boko Haram and Al-Qaeda in the Maghreb (AQIM) in African conflict zones. There is also a growing focus on the fact that refugees and migrants are transiting through countries including Mali, Niger and Sudan on their way to the Mediterranean coast and Europe. The problems of transnational extremism and unregulated migration are tied to weak governance and organized criminal networks. Many observers fear that these challenges will worsen in the coming years. A recent review of data on extremism by The Economist warned of a potential "continental metastasis": "The cancer of jihadism in sub-Saharan Africa will probably spread outward from conflicts now underway involving groups in Libya and Nigeria; their members are likely to flee into the sandy expanse that covers much of Africa above the equator, as happened after French forces tried to wipe out extremists in northern Mali in 2013."[4]

These developments on Europe's southern flank are still lower priorities in most NATO capitals than events in the Middle East and Ukraine. Nonetheless, European governments and the U.S. have begun to invest in containing regional threats across North and East Africa. In the wake of the Mali conflict, France launched *Operation Barkhane*, a regional counter-terrorism mission involving 3,000 troops based in Chad but with orders to pursue extremists in Niger and Mali. The EU has pumped money into the African Union Stabilization Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), while also training the Somali army and maintaining an anti-piracy force offshore. EU missions are also involved in training the Malian army and attempting to build up the rule of law and anti-extremist efforts across the Sahel more generally.

U.S. and French covert operations are also increasingly common across the region. In 2013, the head of U.S. Africa Command (only launched in 2008) described it as "extremely active", with over 500 distinct "activities" in one year ranging from training exercises to kinetic operations.[5] The U.S. has also deployed drones to Chad and Niger to track Islamist movements, and NATO members have provided advisers and equipment to help Nigeria battle Boko Haram.

## LARGE AREAS OF AFRICA, ARE REGIONS OF GROWING STRATEGIC CONCERN FOR EUROPEAN POLICY-MAKERS. THE PRIMARY REASON FOR THIS IS THE PRESENCE OF ISLAMIST EXTREMIST GROUPS IN AFRICAN CONFLICT ZONES.

These operations are fundamentally changing the terms of security cooperation between European countries, the U.S. and their African counterparts. New alliances are forming between African governments threatened by violent extremism and European and U.S. officials who want to limit the spillover effects of this violence. "France is thinking of its security, because what happens in Africa has consequences in Europe," President François Hollande argued on a visit to Benin this July. "So by ensuring the fight against terrorism with our African friends, we are protecting ourselves."[6] Although France has always placed a greater emphasis on African security issues than other NATO members, it is notable that even some European countries that are more skeptical, such as Germany, are taking a greater interest. Berlin has, for example, sent a field hospital to assist the EU training mission in Mali and is also planning to send personnel to the UN mission there.

## UN PEACE OPERATIONS IN A NEW AFRICAN SECURITY CONTEXT

This paper asks what this new focus on African security issues means for UN peace operations in general, and European contributions in particular to blue helmet missions. The vast majority of UN peacekeepers continue to be based in Africa. The UN mission in Mali (MINUSMA) has been entangled in the broader battle with Islamist extremists, losing over forty personnel to ambushes and improvised explosive devices (IEDs). A UN logistics mission sustains AMISOM in Somalia. Other large-scale UN forces in Africa, including those in Darfur, South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Central African Republic (CAR) do not have the same frontline roles in conflicts with transnational Islamist extremism. But if pessimistic predictions about the further spread of extremist groups are correct, these forces may face the destabilizing consequences. The mission in CAR (MINUSCA) is tasked with supporting reconciliation and reconstruction after bloody clashes between Christians and Muslims, a potential source of future radicalization.

**Figure 1. Current UN missions in Africa (all uniformed personnel), 30/8/15**
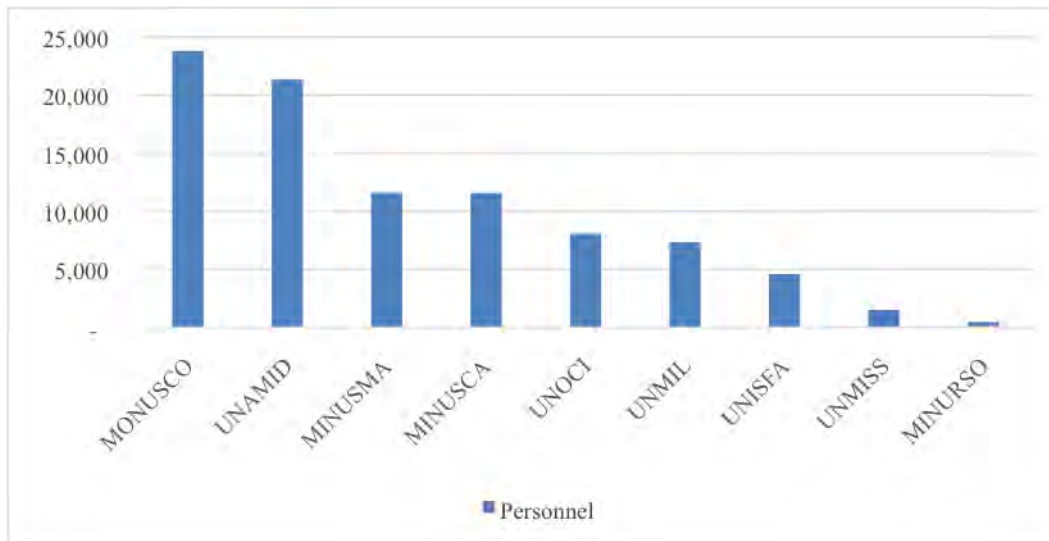


There are severe doubts inside the UN about the organization's ability to operate in such threatening contexts. The recent HIPPO report concluded that blue helmet operations "lack the specific equipment, intelligence, logistics, capabilities and specialized military equipment required" to operate effectively against violent extremists.[7] Major General Michael Lollesgaard, the Danish general currently in charge of the military component of MINUSMA, recently told the Security Council that his mission was "not really" geared to handle asymmetric threats. "I have some good assets," he stated, "but overall there are some major shortfalls that make us extremely vulnerable."[8] Ban Ki-moon has also warned member states that he shares the HIPPO's wariness of counter-terrorism missions.[9]

Yet there is also a frank recognition that, at least in Africa and potentially in the Middle East, UN forces will probably be called upon to operate in more theaters plagued by violent extremism, not fewer. "I am not in doubt that in future there will certainly be continuous need for peacekeeping operations in asymmetric environments," Major General Lollesgaard told the Council. "I do not doubt that the United Nations will be called upon to establish those kinds of missions, because who else would?"[10] Even the highly skeptical High-Level Panel admitted that the UN should develop the necessary capabilities, training and doctrine to function effectively in the face of asymmetric challengers "including through a preventive and preemptive posture and willingness to use force tactically to protect civilians and UN personnel."[11] The UN may not undertake overt *counter*-terrorism missions in the near future, but it will almost certainly have to *contain* and *mitigate* threats from extremist groups to the communities it defends, as well as its own forces.

This is also centrally important to European governments' involvement in peace operations. NATO and EU members have been unusually interested in deploying troops to MINUSMA given Mali's links to extremism and migration. As of August 2015, the UN had a total of 11,511 soldiers and police officers in Mali.[12] Of these, 534 were from the Netherlands, 227 from Sweden and 91 from other NATO/EU states – 852 personnel in total. This is still less than 8 per cent of the total force, but the figures do not tell the full story: with the Netherlands in the lead, European countries have provided essential intelligence officers, special forces, advanced helicopters and tactical airlift to the mission. By contrast, there were just 20 European personnel based in and serving with the UN

in CAR – not immediately associated with an extremist threat – representing 0.002 per cent of the overall UN uniformed presence. European governments are not only motivated to deploy peacekeepers as a result of fears of terrorism and its possible migration, but it is easier to "sell" a deployment to somewhere like Mali domestically when it appears directly connected to challenges to Europe.

Reinforcing this, the Obama administration has urged its NATO partners to take UN peace operations more seriously as part of the broader task of transatlantic burden-sharing on security. In a speech in Brussels this March, U.S. ambassador to the UN Samantha Power outlined the challenges on Europe's southern flank and argued "UN peacekeeping needs European militaries more than ever."[13] Power praised the Netherlands' engagement in Mali in particular, describing it as targeted, effective and "momentum-shifting".

In reality, the presence of a significant number of European personnel in MINUSMA has not, as Major General Lollesgaard's comments made clear, been sufficient to overcome the major asymmetric threats the operation faces. Nonetheless, it seems probable that if the UN does take on more missions aimed at containing extremist threats, European governments will at least have to consider deploying more troops within these missions, and the U.S. may put them under more pressure to do so.

Numerous European leaders attended a summit on peacekeeping commitments hosted by President Obama in New York in September 2015. They offered troops and assets that, U.S. officials estimate, double the number of Europeans under UN command – although many of these will be in the Middle East rather than African missions. British Prime Minister David Cameron underlined that, in pledging British engineers to the UN mission in South Sudan, he aimed to achieve "less terrorism and less migration."[14]

As this paper emphasizes, it is necessary to think further about what types of European deployments in such risky missions are feasible and useful. It is worth noting that the Mali experience is providing useful insights into how European forces can operate most effectively inside UN forces in Africa, building on previous experiences of European contingents in relatively recent cases including Liberia and Chad. But while these previous examples are helpful, it is also necessary to recognize that the political and strategic context for deploying peacekeepers in Africa is rapidly changing.

## RECOGNIZING AFRICAN LEADERSHIP

This is not only because of the rise of violent extremism: African governments are also shaking up many of the assumptions underlying UN and non-UN peace operations on the continent. The number of African troops in UN and non-UN missions has grown markedly over the last five years: as of 2014, 70,000 African personnel were deployed in UN, AU and other missions.[15] Their governments are increasingly insisting on setting the agenda for these operations, often by taking direct action on the ground. African officials are advocating increasingly robust responses to conflicts, opposing the notion (still popular in the UN) that peacekeepers should not go "where there is no peace to keep."

In 2013, West African nations hurried to send troops to support the French intervention in Mali. In the same year, a group of southern African nations successfully lobbied the Security Council to launch the Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) within the UN Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) with a mandate to "neutralize" militias in the east of the country.[16] In the last two years, African forces have also played a major role in reducing violence in CAR and rolling back Boko Haram in northern Nigeria and its neighbors.

**Figure 2: Growth in African deployments in UN and non-UN missions, 2010-2014.**
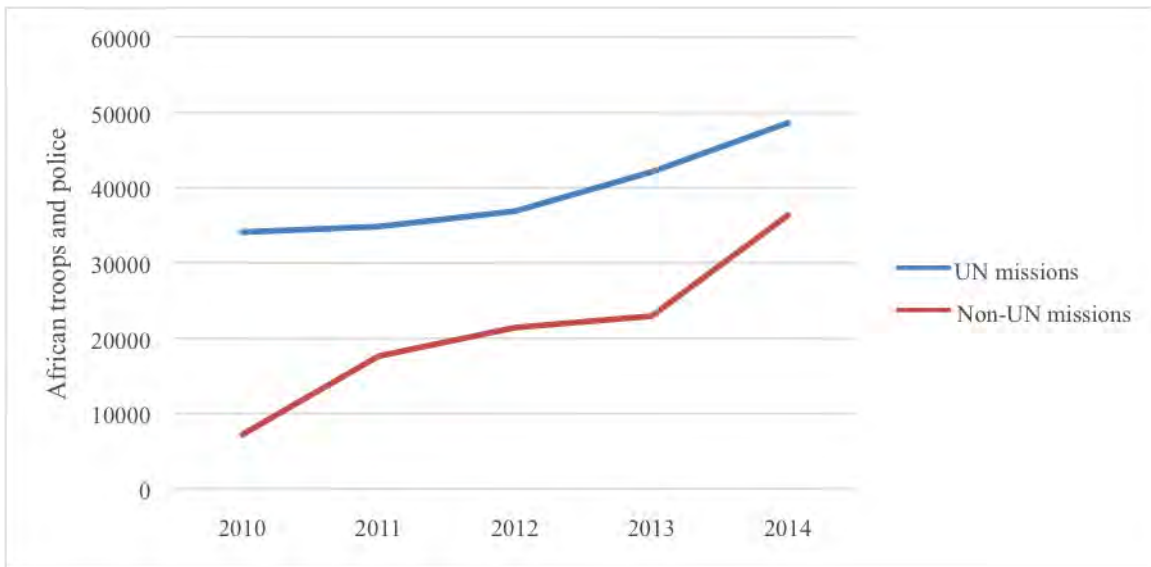


Given the willingness of African governments to take robust action, some observers ask whether it is necessary to deploy UN operations at all in volatile environments when the AU and sub-regional organizations seem better suited to taking serious risks. However, recent experiences suggest that there is still a gap between what African governments are willing to commit politically and what they can achieve operationally. ECOWAS was, for example, willing to deploy forces to Mali in 2012, but it struggled with planning and delayed its deployment until France intervened in January 2013. The AU's logistical and administrative weaknesses, in addition to financial factors, hampered its operations in Somalia (leading to the deployment of a UN support mission) and CAR (where the UN replaced the AU force in late 2014).

**Figure 3: Top 20 African Military/Police Contributors to UN Missions, 30/8/15.**
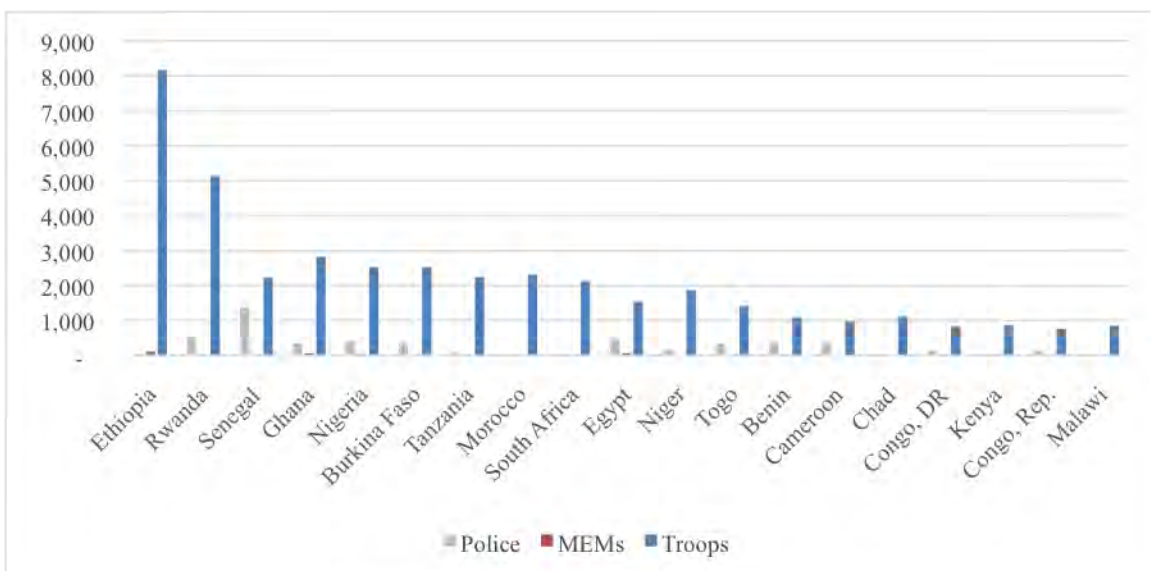
In addition to these planning and managerial gaps, training and discipline problems are also a recurring problem. Nigeria and Chad, for example, both cut back their presence in Mali after discovering that they lacked the equipment and training necessary to operate effectively alongside the French. Both the AU-led operation in CAR and its UN successor have been plagued by reports of sexual abuse, human rights violations, indiscipline and random violence by their personnel. Although the UN's systems are very far from perfect, the organization provides a more reliable framework for operations.

Even so, it is still a clear political fact that the continent's leaders are growing more willing and able to set the agenda for operations in their regions, and outsiders have to adapt to their wishes. India, Pakistan and a number of other traditional UN troop contributors objected to the formation of the FIB in 2013, for example, but had to back down when it became clear that South Africa, Tanzania and Malawi were not merely willing to lobby for the force but were ready to send the necessary troops.[17]

Many African governments are also increasing their defense spending, meaning that they should be able to deploy more capable units in future, further strengthening their diplomatic hands. Defense expenditure on the continent grew by over 8% in 2013 alone.[18] Not all of this money has necessarily been used wisely: South Sudan, for example, placed an order for 100 Ukrainian tanks before its descent into civil war.

## THERE IS ALSO A FRANK RECOGNITION THAT, AT LEAST IN AFRICA AND POTENTIALLY IN THE MIDDLE EAST, UN FORCES WILL PROBABLY BE CALLED UPON TO OPERATE IN MORE THEATERS PLAGUED BY VIOLENT EXTREMISM

In the meantime, the AU continues to rely almost entirely on European donors to cover the costs of operation such as AMISOM. But as African governments increase their military capacities, both the UN and European governments will have to give them an enhanced voice in planning and managing operations as a matter of both principle and pragmatism. Ban Ki-moon has recently underlined the importance of the UN's strategic partnership with the AU.[19]

In light of this context, this paper now proceeds to ask (i) whether the UN can devise effective concepts for containing/mitigating violent extremism in Africa; (ii) what role European forces can play in implementing these concepts; and (iii) how to cooperate with African militaries in this context, especially in cases where African leaders may actually argue for a more robust approach than the UN can implement.

# CONTAINING/MITIGATING VIOLENT EXTREMISM

If UN peace operations are not designed to fight terrorists, what can they achieve in the face of violent extremism? Addressing the Security Council, Major General Lollesgaard defined his goals as "trying, mainly defensively, to protect the population as well as we can" on the basis of *(i)* good political analysis and situational awareness; *(ii)* reassuring the population and offering "the possibility of a future without the armed groups"; and *(iii)* solid force protection.[20] Others have argued that Mali shows that the UN should develop a clear "stabilization doctrine" of its own.[21] As Cedric de Coning has noted, a number of UN missions have "stabilization" in their title, including those in the DRC and CAR as well as Mali.[22] Yet their mandates vary widely and the Security Council, UN secretariat and troop contributors often have divergent perceptions of what their strategic goal involves.[23]

Equally, despite Lollesgaard's emphasis on protection, the UN still struggles with what it means by the "protection of civilians", even though the Secretariat and outside scholars have done copious work on this issue. A recent internal report found that peacekeepers had responded to just one in five of some 500 reported threats to civilians in recent years.[24] Many peacekeeping units have lacked either the capability to deter violence or have refused to obey commands. Statistical analyses suggest that UN forces have very mixed results in terms of stemming violence against civilians. In Darfur, for example, the presence of an unwieldy blue helmet operation has not stopped increases in violence, whereas the deployment of the FIB succeeded (at least temporarily) in reducing violence in the eastern DRC.[25]

Even if UN forces aim to adopt a largely "defensive" approach to extremist groups or other perpetrators of violence (such as the armed forces and militias in South Sudan), they are likely to face major strategic and operational difficulties. In cases such as Mali, the UN also has to calibrate its operations with two factors: those of parallel French forces still conducting aggressive counter-terrorism missions; and the national armed forces, which have failed to deal with secessionist groups by force, making lasting peace harder to achieve. The UN's tension with armed forces is indicative of broader rifts that often open between the UN and host governments. These governments often feel that the blue helmets are too cautious in dealing with opponents, or that they have been deployed only to support them.

Nonetheless, analyses of the Mali case and other regions where the UN faces serious asymmetric threats do point to the principles of potentially effective strategies for containing/mitigating extremist threats and building stability.[26] At the strategic level, these include:

1) developing a clear political strategy to bring as many parties as possible into a peace process, and reject extremist groups;

2) boosting these efforts with economic initiatives, especially aimed at employment for former and potential combatants; and

3) clearly framing these UN and non-UN-led initiatives to prevent violent extremism with efforts to improve the rule of law, good governance and development.

It is essential to see that violent extremism can rarely if ever be tackled in isolation. Surveys in Mali, for example, have shown that the public attribute the recent political crisis to "the weakness of the state", "a lack of patriotism among leaders" and corruption, not the threat from Islamist groups.[27]

The military element of a peace operation cannot compensate for a lack of political strategy. But it can contribute to the implementation of an effective strategy by providing a credible security presence to deter and respond to violent challengers.

To support its political strategy, it is essential that the mission leadership has sufficient information to address both political developments and security threats, backed by analysts to process this information and trace political and conflict dynamics. It is also crucial to have civilian and military planners and staff officers capable of processing this information and turning it into credible plans at a high rate. While European intelligence officers deployed to assist MINUSMA in 2013, the mission leadership initially lacked the capacity to turn the material it received into effective planning, and the operation continues to be hampered by a lack of in-depth political analysis.[28]

Potential sources of information are expanding rapidly and growing more complex. As John Karlsrud has noted, missions are increasingly able to access social media and other open-source information that, if processed properly, can give insights into unfolding security threats.[29] Equally, missions can use these resources to share their own messages with vulnerable populations. At a very simple level, the 2012 UN Supervision Mission in Syria both followed social media to identify security incidents and broadcast videos of its activities.[30] This will become more common in peace operations, but will only be effective if mission leaders understand the tools.

In operational terms, maintaining a credible security presence involves ensuring:

• UN bases, patrols and logistics convoys are well protected against attack;

• a mission has sufficient air assets (including helicopters and transport planes) to remain mobile and respond quickly even during periods of intense violence;

• a mission has reliable evacuation and medical facilities capable of handling significant casualties when necessary; and

• a reliable military communications system.

In Mali, European and non-European units have struggled to cooperate in some cases due to a lack of compatible communications equipment, and in other cases UN forces have been unable to respond to atrocities because of communications issues.

The most sensitive aspect of strengthening peace operations is, of course, the question of offensive capabilities. Following the deployment of the FIB in DRC, there has been an ongoing debate about whether other missions should also have the support of similar stand-alone intervention brigades. The Malian government has proposed the deployment of such a force within MINUSMA. However, there are reasons for caution. First, while the FIB in the DRC scored initial successes, it did so against relatively weak opponents and in coordination with effective Congolese army units. Second, some other UN forces based in the FIB's operational area reportedly became passive in the face of violence, arguing that the special brigade should handle these problems. The overall performance of MONUSCO has thus been lowered. Finally, the troop contributors to the FIB have set explicit limits on what armed groups their personnel will and will not target, meaning that the brigade has become much less effective over the last year.

There is, however, a clear need for any force facing threats from extremists or other attackers to have a rapid reaction force that can move quickly to quell violence. A positive model is arguably the Irish-Swedish Quick Reaction Force (QRF) that deployed as part of the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) in 2003-2004.[31] This unit of around 600 troops was based near the capital, Monrovia, but undertook "robust patrolling" and operations on the country's borders.[32] It did not engage in offensives, but signaled to potential spoilers that the mission could react firmly to attacks. An Irish unit has recently played a similar role on the Golan Heights, deploying in one crisis to relieve a Fijian base that had come under siege by an Islamist militia.[33] A large-scale mission covering a large area may need a number of such response forces based at strategic hubs to provide wider reassurance. It may also need to deploy advanced assets, as with the Apache helicopters from the Netherlands in Mali.

**Figure 4: Top 10 Financial Contributors to UN Peacekeeping Budget**

**STRUCTURAL IMBALANCE: While Europeans dominate the top 10 countries who pay for peacekeeping, none of them are among the top ten contributors of troops, police, and military experts.**
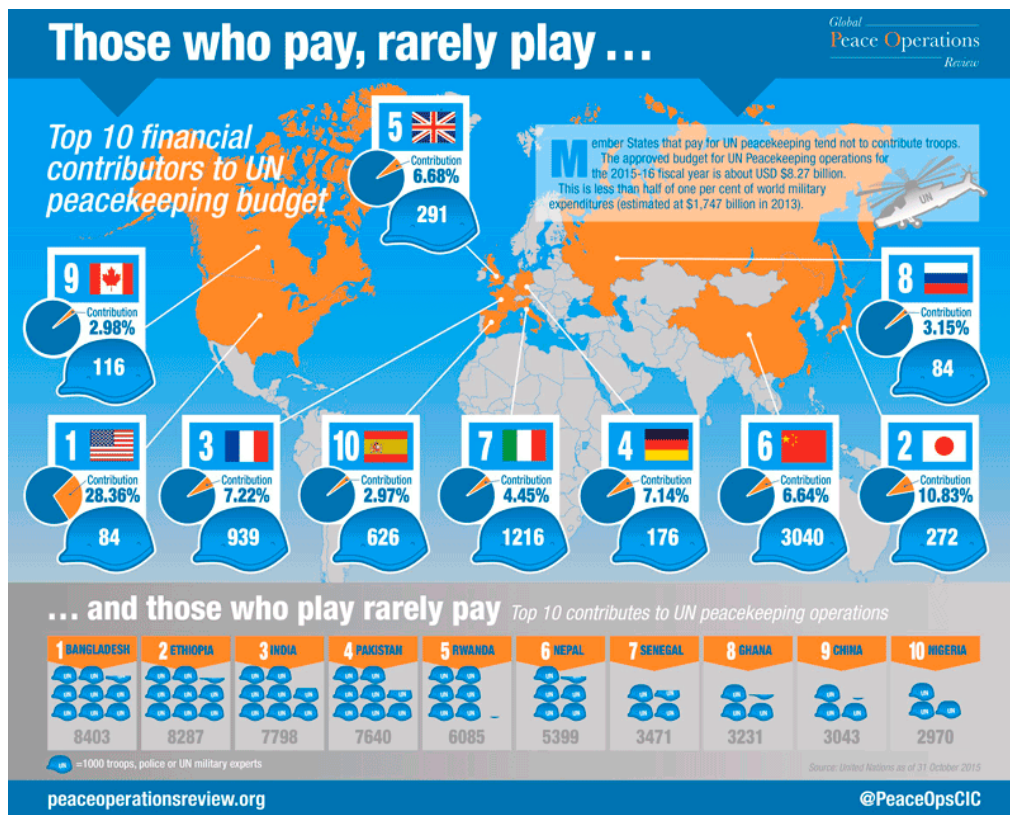


The High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations has also suggested that the UN could supplement such tactical-level rapid reaction forces with strategic-level "vanguard" forces: rapid reaction forces based in regional hubs ready to reinforce one of a number of missions in a crisis, or facilitate new deployments.[34] The HIPPO report also noted that where UN missions draw down, "security arrangements or over-the-horizon guarantees may be needed from regional, international or other partners."[35]

There is thus a need for strategic reserve forces to assist UN missions in getting going, keeping going under pressure and eventually making a safe exit. The UN is increasingly experimenting in this area, for example by setting up a single quick reaction force to cover both Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire. It is possible to envisage a vanguard force based in West Africa tasked with assisting MINUSMA and additionally providing an "over-the-horizon" guarantee for other countries where the UN is drawing down. A similar unit based in the Great Lakes region could cover South Sudan, CAR and the eastern DRC. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has described this as an "intriguing" concept, but it raises a number of difficult questions that need study.[36] Who would contribute forces to such a unit and at what level of readiness? How much would it cost? What would happen if the country providing basing facilities to the force objected to its deployment due to regional political concerns?

Finally, it is also important that where UN forces are operating alongside other missions with more aggressive counter-terrorist mandates, there should be detailed and consistent inter-mission coordination to avoid friction. The HIPPO has noted the importance of maintaining a clear distinction between UN missions and counter-terrorism forces in public, but consultations and joint planning are also essential.[37] Experience has shown that where parallel missions do not coordinate closely, the risks of security incidents rise, potentially damaging both operations.[38]

## EUROPEAN OFFICERS REMAIN SUSPICIOUS OF THE UN'S COMMAND AND CONTROL ARRANGEMENTS AND HOW THEY WORK IN PERIODS OF SIGNIFICANT VIOLENCE. IN MANY CASES THESE ATTITUDES REFLECT PREJUDICES DATING BACK TO THE 1990S.

Overall, therefore, the outlines of a UN approach to containing/mitigating the challenges of violent extremists are taking shape, influenced by experiences in Mali and elsewhere. While operations should aim to build trust and disenfranchise extremist forces through political and economic tools, a mobile and robust military presence should also provide solid security guarantees to a vulnerable population.

In reality, as NATO's experience in Afghanistan has shown, even an advanced and sizeable international force will struggle to protect civilians from extremist groups and insurgents bent on violence. A UN operation without a mandate for offensives is likely to have an even lower deterrent effect. As Jason Stearns has observed of the DRC, an excessive focus on military operations may distract from political priorities: While the FIB did score successes in 2013-2014, it took attention from President Kabila's maneuvers in Kinshasa to hold onto power at the end of his term in 2016.[39]

Planners and mission leaders should not overestimate the capacity of even advanced military formations. They must also consider the effects of their operations and security on humanitarian agencies around them. Nonetheless, it is clear that European forces could contribute in many of the areas outlined above.

# EUROPEAN CONTRIBUTIONS TO FUTURE UN MISSIONS

The array of military tasks outlined above places a premium on operational areas where the UN is traditionally weak, including intelligence-gathering and mobility. It also offers a menu of potential contributions for European militaries to fill, whether through deploying full units or specific experts, or providing training, equipment and mentoring to other militaries to prepare them for threats from extremists. An obvious case for training concerns improvised explosive devices (IEDs), which have been responsible for at least half of peacekeeper fatalities in Africa. This is partially because many African soldiers ride in open trucks and soft-skinned vehicles, but it also reflects the fact that troop contributing countries have different training standards for dealing with IEDs. Even the UN's own guidance is inconsistent.[40] It is clear that European militaries – having learned to deal with IEDs through trial and error in Afghanistan and Iraq – are well-placed to help other peacekeepers improve.

European militaries have also used Mali as a laboratory for other experiments with supporting the UN. As noted, one such experiment was setting up an intelligence cell, the All Sources Information Fusion Unit (ASIFU). This has encountered some obstacles, including internal confusion over how to locate this innovation in the UN command structure, but it has gradually become more effective.[41] In addition to the Apache squadron from the Netherlands, a number of European countries (Denmark, Portugal and Germany) have also provided C-130 and C-160 transport aircraft to give the operation additional in-country mobility.[42] Again, there have been some setbacks over the specifications of the aircraft and how to use them, but the mission and European contributors have slowly grown accustomed to working with one another.

Although these are notably substantial deployments by the standards of European commitments to the UN in Africa, they follow a pre-existing pattern by which NATO and/or EU members have tended to focus on offering "niche" capabilities and enablers rather than infantry battalions or other large-scale units.[43] While a number of European countries including the United Kingdom and Germany are considering contributions to the UN, they are also thinking about focused capacities.

Reviewing the outline of UN options for containing/mitigating violent extremists, we can identify various areas where Europeans could make niche contributions. One is simply to expand the number of expert officers in missions with knowledge of extremist strategies and potential responses. Such expertise could comprise advising the civilian and military leadership of a mission, or embedding with individual units from countries with less experience in this field to act as mentors to contingents officers. Additionally, staff officers and planners with expertise in devising and directing intelligence-based operations will increasingly be in demand in UN missions if the ASIFU model is repeated elsewhere and it becomes possible to improve planning.

Larger-scale potential contributions include (i) more ASIFU-type units to support mission leaders; and (ii) field hospitals and other medical units. Ban Ki-moon has already launched a review of medical units and facilities in missions.[44] This is also a major source of concern for European militaries considering deploying with the UN. A recent survey of Irish experiences in peace operations found that officers felt that one key to UNMIL's success was a Netherlands hospital ship off Monrovia. In contrast, doubts over the provision of medical care in the Chad mission (MINURCAT) almost led Dublin to withdraw from the mission.[45] Many European planners continue to argue that they cannot send more troops on UN missions without better medical support.

European militaries can address this problem directly by deploying more medical units of their own under UN command. Another area where European forces may be able to play a significant enabling role is logistics. General Lollesgaard told the Security Council in June that he desperately needed robust military logistics, whereas the UN continued to use civilian contractors. "To be more specific, north of the Niger River," he added, "hostilities are so imminent and the road conditions are so poor that it is irresponsible to keep going there with old, fragile civilian trucks that are unprotected and are driven by people who are not soldiers."[46] European analysts repeat this point. Edward Burke notes that the UN also relies heavily on civilian air crew, and that "civilian contractors often do not allow their personnel to deploy to hostile areas."[47] A byproduct of this, Burke adds, is that "peacekeeping commanders spend much of their time talking to civilian officials in New York, trying to unblock political and logistical problems, instead of focusing on day-to-day military matters."

Ban Ki-moon has declared that he will "invite regional partners and Member States that have capabilities in key enabling areas to propose and provide specialist support packages to address specific substantive and support needs, particularly for short duration tasks to address urgent field requirements or temporary gaps."[48] In light of this commitment, European militaries – potentially partnering with non-European counterparts on a region-by-region basis – could offer to provide the UN with short-term military logistical support during periods of intense conflict in cases such as Mali. (There is at least one good precedent, as European nations made their own logistical arrangements for rapid deployment to Lebanon after the 2006 war.) While there is a large conservative element within the UN secretariat that opposes such innovations, a case such as Mali demands a response from capable countries.

## EUROPEAN OFFICERS REMAIN SUSPICIOUS OF THE UN'S COMMAND AND CONTROL ARRANGEMENTS AND HOW THEY WORK IN PERIODS OF SIGNIFICANT VIOLENCE.

There are other niche capability areas that have been referenced in previous reports (such as engineering units, another need flagged by Ban) or that will only occasionally be relevant (such as WMD specialists, and these are most likely to deploy outside Africa).[49] However, the most sensitive question will be under what circumstances European governments are willing to deploy combat forces in Africa. As mentioned, there are recent examples of these deployments, including *(i)* the Irish-Swedish rapid reaction force in UNMIL; *(ii)* a significant number of units in MINURCAT (Chad) in 2009-2011; and *(iii)* the reconnaissance and attack helicopter elements of the Netherlands presence in Mali. Nonetheless European governments remain wary of sending medium- and large-scale combat forces to Africa. This is true not only of UN operations but also EU-flagged missions, as the poor response to the EU's mission to CAR in 2014 demonstrated. EU governments are possibly additionally cautious in cases where combat troops could end up in firefights with extremists. They are also likely to be wary about signing up for any FIB-style missions, in which the UN is formally a party to the conflict as it sets out to neutralize specific opponents.[50]

More broadly, European officers remain suspicious of the UN's command and control arrangements and how they work in periods of significant violence. In many cases these attitudes reflect prejudices dating back to the 1990s. Yet even European soldiers with more recent experience of UN operations have their doubts. As Burke notes, Ireland is loyal to blue helmet missions but even so, "experiences of NATO and/or EU operations have raised expectations. Concepts of force protection – the ability to respond to

attacks and to retrieve casualties – have changed forever."[51] In Mali, the Netherlands has insisted on maintaining military control over its Chinook transport helicopters so that they can be used in response to a crisis at short notice.

The recent UN reform process has not culminated in any fundamental reforms to command and control arrangements. As a result, it is likely that Europeans will be, at a minimum, highly selective in their approach to combat roles in the UN's African missions. Nonetheless, there are some models for European engagements in robust operations under the UN's aegis. These include (i) deploying special forces independently alongside UN-led troops, with a mandate to support them in periods of crisis in consultation with the UN force commander; or (ii) inserting troops directly into a UN mission as rapid response forces with special command arrangements to allow them to undertake kinetic actions to protect the operation.

European governments can also contribute to the development of the High-Level Panel's "vanguard forces" in Africa. As noted, this is still at the conceptual stage, and European militaries could help push the concept through consultations with African partners. In the longer term, it is improbable that European governments will dedicate troops to vanguard contingents on the African continent. But it is possible that European militaries could help launch the concept by prepositioning some assets and training specialized personnel (such as planning, liaison and logistics officers) to help with the rapid deployment of largely African forces into future crises. They could also help plan and, if necessary, support regional over-the-horizon forces on the continent. This brings us to the broader question of how European and African governments can work together to prepare for future UN operations.

## TRIANGULAR COOPERATION WITH AFRICAN PARTNERS AND THE UN

European and African militaries cooperate closely on training and other security issues. Yet when they deploy alongside one another in a case such as Mali, the differences in their capabilities, skills and expectations are all too obvious. As Lisa Sharland notes, the Netherlands responded to the IED threat in Mali by deploying a specialist anti-IED unit, but African contingents in the north of the country remained poorly protected, fuelling a perception of unfairness within the operation.[52]

Nevertheless, current and future UN operations are liable to rely increasingly strongly on African contingents, even if they are of mixed quality. In the early 2000s, troops from Asia and Latin America often made up the backbone of UN forces in Africa. In numerical terms at least, this remains the case in DRC, South Sudan and Côte d'Ivoire, where non-African troops still make up the bulk of UN forces. These statistics may be misleading: As we have noted, the FIB in DRC consists of African troops, while other peacekeepers have been relatively passive. Even more strikingly, most recent UN missions on the continent do have a majority of African troops. Over three-quarters of UN troops and police officers in CAR are from other African countries. 7,876 of the 11,511 uniformed personnel in Mali (68 per cent) are also from Africa. More specifically, African countries are tending to deploy troops to conflicts in their immediate strategic neighborhoods. 6,520 (57 per cent) of MINUSMA uniformed personnel are from members of ECOWAS (which, as we have seen, was planning to intervene in Mali as early as 2012) and a further 1,114 are from Chad, which sees challenges across the Sahel as threats to its own security. A similar pattern holds in CAR, where central African states such as Burundi, Gabon, Rwanda and (remarkably) the DRC are prominent contributors to MINUSCA's ranks.

In the past, UN officials often worked on the basis that "neighbors make bad peacekeepers", and would have tried hard to avoid such sub-regional clusters of troop contributors in Africa. Now, however, it is becoming increasingly necessary for the UN to co-opt neighbors into its peacemaking and peacekeeping strategies across Africa. Algeria has led mediation efforts for northern

Mali, relegating MINUSMA officials to a supporting role. Similarly, the east African organization IGAD has led uneven peacemaking efforts in South Sudan, while Uganda has deployed its own troops to support President Salva Kiir. The most obvious case of regional actors impinging on the independence of UN operations is, however, probably still the FIB. As we have seen, southern African countries (South Africa, Tanzania and Malawi) advocated for the special brigade and provided the troops. Their open goal was to curb Rwanda's proxy militia forces in the eastern DRC: although deployed under a UN banner, the FIB was always part of a regional power play too.

This was arguably a source of strength. "In the past, militia commanders backed by Rwanda were able to maneuver around UN units, most of which came from far-off place like South Asia and Latin America," this author noted at the time of the FIB's launch, "but the new brigade is a tripwire force that cannot be treated so lightly."[53] This assessment proved somewhat unfair: The FIB did engage in some hard fighting, and followed tactical orders from a Brazilian general with no stake in local power battles. Yet, as we have also noted, the contributors to the brigade have also reined in their operations in recent months, refusing to attack specific *anti-Rwandan* militias.

This holds important lessons for UN and European officials elsewhere, including those considering how to employ peacekeeping forces to contain/mitigate threats from violent extremism in Africa. In future, it will be necessary to engage regional powers in planning, mandating and implementing such missions. It will also be necessary to assess the risks associated with their participation. Are there cases where a neighbor's presence and influence in a peace operation will do more harm than good? Is there a risk that building regional buy-in for a force will compromise its operational competence? The UN has already had to dodge around problems of this type in Mali, where Chad has been accused of deploying underage soldiers.[54] Ban Ki-moon has promised to crack down on such aberrations, and the UN Secretariat has mechanisms to penalize underperforming contingents financially.

Yet there are limits to how tough the UN can be with such regional partners. Sometimes they are the only ones willing to deploy peacekeepers at all. More generally, their political and practical support is necessary to let UN missions work. As Arthur Boutellis observes, "a major obstacle for a UN mission to contribute to stabilization is the fact that it is geographically limited ... while terrorism and organized crime and groups operate across borders in the Sahel region."[55] MINUSMA is relatively fortunate in that the UN has a well-established office in West Africa dealing with conflict prevention (UNOWA). A similar office in central Africa (UNOCA) has acted as an adjunct to MINUSCA. Yet the real key to any regional strategy in either case, or elsewhere, has to be dealing with the neighbors.

This holds true for those European countries that want to deploy in UN operations in Africa. Planning for such deployments cannot simply involve coordination with the UN Secretariat and the Security Council. Instead, it needs to involve multi-level engagement with regional powers on how to handle both instability and extremism.

This form of engagement could take a number of forms. At a basic tactical level, it could involve agreements to (i) embed pre-prepared European advisers on issues such as IEDs and community engagement strategies with African units in future deployments; or (ii) conducting joint trainings and table-top exercises handling extremist violence under UN rules with potential regional contributors. sAt an elite military level, it could also involve training on such specific aspects of containing/mitigating violent extremism. These might include intelligence-based planning, using open source information to track political events, and (most crucially) mechanisms for maintaining discipline and human rights standards in the face of extremism. European forces have already experimented with a range of "embedding" options to bolster African units in Mali, providing models that can be repeated in other cases.[56]

At a broader level, European countries could aim to combine funding with operational cooperation to assist African countries in developing rapidly deployable medical facilities, along with robust military logistics capacities that can potentially be deployed in tandem with European assets. European and African officials should liaise jointly with the UN secretariat on these procedures to report on standards.

Finally, as noted above, the HIPPO's proposal for "vanguard" units to back up missions under pressure could also be an area for Euro-African cooperation. Both the EU and the AU have made unsuccessful experiments with formal rapid reaction mechanisms. The EU's Battle Groups (although still commended by the High-Level Panel) have become notorious for their inability to deploy. The AU is constantly slipping behind schedule in setting up its much-vaunted African Standby Force (in reality a system of regional brigades), and leading African powers are already working up alternative deployment mechanisms.[57] Although this is unfortunate, most rapid reaction remains *ad hoc*. While thinking on UN "vanguard forces" remains embryonic, there is always a risk that it could go in the wrong direction, focus instead on unworkable models like the Battle Groups and ASF.

Yet it may still be possible to create a better model. While the idea of vanguard forces is still at the "intriguing" stage, interested European countries have the potential to shape debate by promoting public and inter-governmental discussions of lessons from cases such as Mali, South Sudan and CAR for future rapid deployments in Africa. EU countries can also consult with African partners and the UN on how European enablers and specialized units could assist African units to deploy rapidly in a "vanguard" function in future. It is possible that medium-sized but well-prepared African forces (comparable to the individual units making up the FIB) could deploy alongside European specialist forces in future to reinforce the UN.

## IT IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY NECESSARY FOR THE UN TO CO-OPT NEIGHBORS INTO ITS PEACEMAKING AND PEACEKEEPING STRATEGIES ACROSS AFRICA

Similarly, European planners can work with African partners in preparing over-the-horizon options to assist countries that return to violence after a UN presence exits – or preferably act as a deterrent against such relapses. European militaries have considerable experience with over-the-horizon models. Past examples have included keeping EU troops on standby for deployment to the DRC in case of serious electoral violence in 2006; and maintaining reserves to deploy to Bosnia and Kosovo in the event of an emergency. Working in tandem with UN officials, European militaries could assist African partners in devising similar models to provide long-term security guarantees in countries such as Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire and potentially the DRC following a UN exit. In a crisis, European militaries could offer transport and specialized assets for an emergency deployment. In some cases it may be possible to develop "dual use" vanguard/over-the-horizon forces, able to both reinforce UN missions and provide security guarantees in "post-peacekeeping" countries in the same region.

# CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper has made four main points.

- **First**: European governments are obliged to take a new interest in African security due to the spread of violent extremist movements.

- **Second**: despite many limitations, it is possible for UN forces to contain and mitigate threats from violent extremists, if they have robust political, economic and security strategies.

- **Third**: European militaries can contribute directly to making UN missions more robust, learning from cases such as Mali.

- **Fourth**: it is essential that European countries align their efforts with those of African governments. Ultimately, the evolution of African policies and deployments will be of far greater significance to the continent than marginal contributions from Europe.

## CURRENT AND FUTURE UN OPERATIONS ARE LIABLE TO RELY INCREASINGLY STRONGLY ON AFRICAN CONTINGENTS, EVEN IF THEY ARE OF MIXED QUALITY

In this context, the paper has tried to trace a line from *(i)* the strategic challenges of countering/mitigating violent extremism for UN peace operations to *(ii)* the capacities that European countries can deploy to address these challenges, and finally to *(iii)* ways in which European governments and militaries can collaborate on these issues. It has focused on the military dimensions of the problem rather than the political and economic aspects. In doing so it has identified a number of priorities for European triangular engagement with the UN and African partners:

1. Providing expert assistance on strategies for dealing with violent extremists at all levels of UN operations, from mission HQ to the field.

2. Parallel assistance on intelligence-led planning and operations, and developing strategic tools such as open source information analysis.

3. Strengthening medical support and evacuation systems.

4. Developing robust military logistics systems to respond to periods of intense violence threatening peace operations.

5. Contributing to tactical-level deterrence and rapid-response mechanisms in UN operations by deploying additional quick reaction forces.

6. Building strategic-level deterrence and response by working with African partners to realize the High-Level Panel's vision of "vanguard" and over-the-horizon forces.

Some of these tasks are urgent. Others will take time. Europe's ability to focus on African security may be reduced by further crises in the Middle East or Eastern Europe. NATO and EU countries will ultimately prioritize those regions over Africa.

But there is both political opportunity and strategic logic in engaging with African crises, and rebooting African capabilities, to stem the spread of violent extremism on the continent. This must be part of a far broader European – and common Euro-African – strategy for preventing and countering violent extremism in Africa that should include political, developmental and capacity-building dimensions. The rule of law, good governance and the broader battle of ideas with Islamist groups are all essential factors for long-term success. Yet, in the short and medium term, European military support to UN peace operations also has an important part to play in limiting the worsening chaos on Europe's southern flank.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

*Richard Gowan is a non-resident fellow at the Center on International Cooperation at NYU, where he was previously research director. He is also a fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations, teaches conflict resolution at Columbia's School of International and Public Affairs, and writes a weekly column ("Diplomatic Fallout") for World Politics Review.* | ***Twitter: @RichardGowan1***

# ENDNOTES

[1]CIC colleagues Sarah Cliffe, Jim Della-Giacoma, John Karlsrud and Alexandra Novosseloff commented on this report. The graphics are by Alison Burt. The final conclusions are the author's alone.

[2]Richard Gowan, 'The EU should do more to support UN peacekeeping in Africa," *Centre for European Reform Bulletin*, June/July 2009.

[3]See *(i)* The High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, *Uniting our Strengths for Peace – Politics, Partnerships and People* (UN, June 2015); and *(ii)* Ban Ki-moon, *The Future of UN Peace Operations: Report of the Secretary-General on the Recommendations of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations* (UN, September 2015).

[4]"Jihafrica," *The Economist*, 18 July 2015.

[5]Bryant Jordan, "The Ebola outbreak isn't the only reason the US Army's footprint in Africa is growing," *Business Inside*r, 8 October 2014.

[6]Allegresse Sasse, "African leaders must respect constitutions or face turmoil: Hollande," *Reuters*, 2 July 2015.

[7]*High-Level Panel, Uniting our Strengths for Peace*, p.31.

[8]Major General Michael Lollesgaard, Remarks to the Security Council, 17 June 2015 UN document S/PV.7464, 17 June 2015), p.4.

[9]Ban Ki-moon, *The Future of UN Peace Operations*, p.8.

[10] Lollesgaard, Remarks to the Security Council, p.5.

[11]High-Level Panel, *Uniting our Strengths for Peace*, p.31.

[12]Data for UN operations in August 2015 are based on UN statistics available at http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/contributors/2015/aug15_5.pdf.

[13]Samantha Power, Remarks on peacekeeping in Brussels, 9 March 2015.

[14]Rowena Mason, "UK to deploy troops to keep peace in Somalia and South Sudan," *The Guardian*, 27 September 2015.

[15]Richard Gowan, "10 trends in peace operations," http://peaceoperationsreview.org/thematic-essays/10-trends-in-peace-operations/ (June 2015).

[16]UN Security Council Resolution 2098, 28 March 2013.

[17]Richard Gowan, "How Africa outflanked India at the UN," *Pragati: The Indian National Interest Review*, 21 June 2013. India and Pakistan have also been skeptical about deploying to CAR and Mali.

[18] "Defence Spending: Arms and the African," *The Economist*, 22 November 2014.

[19]Ban Ki-moon, *The Future of UN Peace Operations*, p.20.

[20]Lollesgaard, Remarks to the Security Council, p.4.

[21]Arthur Boutellis, "Can the UN stabilize Mali? Towards a UN stabilization doctrine?", *Stability*, Vol. 4, Issue 1 (June 2015).

[22]Cedric de Coning, "Do we need a UN stabilization doctrine?", *Complexity 4 Peacekeeping*, 27 November 2014.

[23]In the DRC, the UN essentially equates "stabilization" as "peacebuilding". In other cases, in the words of a European diplomat, "you can put everything into this word so it is good for negotiating the resolution" (private conversation, September 2015).

[24]"UN releases report on sex abuse by peacekeepers," *Al Jazeera*, 16 June 2015.

[25]Paul-Antoine Chataing, "Special focus topic: Peacekeeping and violence against civilians," *ACLED Conflict Trends Report*, No. 40 (August 2015).

[26]The following paragraph synthesizes arguments from *(i)* Boutellis, "Can the UN stabilize Mali?"; *(ii)* de Coning "Do we need a UN stabilization doctrine?"; *(iii)* Lollesgaard, Remarks to the Security Council, and *(iv)* John Karlsrud, "The UN at war: Examining the consequences of peace-enforcement mandates in the CAR, DRC and Mali," *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 36. Issue 1 (2015).

[27]Michael Bratton and E. Gymiah-Boadi, *Political Risks Facing African Democracies: Evidence from Afrobarometer* (Afrobarometer, 2015), p.7.

[28]CIC staff member's private conversation, September 2015.

[29]John Karlsrud, "New tools for blue helmets", http://peaceoperationsreview.org/thematic-essays/new-tools-for-blue-helmets/ (June 2015).

[30]Richard Gowan and Tristan Dreisbach, "United Nations Supervision Mission in Syria (UNSMIS)," in Joachim Koops et al. (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations* (Oxford University Pres, 2015), p.848.

[31]Ireland initially deployed alone, and Sweden added its forces later.

[32]Kathleen Jennings, "United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)," in Koops et al., *The Oxford Handbook*, p.697.

[33]Edward Burke and Jonathan Marley, *Walking Point for Peace: An Irish view on the state of UN peacekeeping* (Center on International Cooperation, June 2014), p.4.

[34]See High-Level Panel, *Uniting our Strengths for Peace*, p.51. The Panel explains that "to allow the UN to insert a quick responding UN military capability into a new mission area or to reinforce an existing mission. The Organization should be able to rely on small dedicated regional vanguard contingents capable of deploying from a regional hub and self-sustaining for up to 180 days."

[35]High-Level Panel, *Uniting our Strengths for Peace*, p.43.

[36]Ban Ki-moon, *The Future of UN Peace Operations*, p.38.

[37]High-Level Panel, *Uniting our Strengths for Peace*, p.32.

[38] During the crisis sparked by Kosovo's unilateral declaration of independence in 2008, for example, the Serb minority seized a courthouse in the city of Mitrovica. UN officials sent police to storm the courthouse, but did not inform the NATO Kosovo Force (KFOR) of their plans. In the ensuing uncoordinated operation, one UN police officer was killed and up to 80 French KFOR troops were wounded.

[39] Jason Stearns, Unpublished CIC paper for the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, January 2016.

[40]Lisa Sharland, *Counter-IED Technology in UN Peacekeeping: Expanding Capability and Mitigating Risks* (International Peace Institute, April 2015), p.9.

[41]John Karlsrud and Adam C. Smith, Europe's Return to Peacekeeping? Lessons from Mali (International Peace Institute, July 2015), pp.11-12.

[42]Ibid, p.3.

[43]Cf. Malte Brosig, "EU peacekeeping in Africa: From functional niches to interlocking security," *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 21, Issue 1.

[44]Ban Ki-moon, *The Future of UN Peace Operations*, p.45.

[45]Burke and Marley, *Walking Point for Peace*, p.21.

[46]Lollesgaard, Remarks to the Security Council, p.5.

[47]Edward Burke, "Rebooting Ireland's commitment to UN peacekeeping," *The Irish Times*, 10 July 2015.

[48]Ban Ki-moon, *The Future of UN Peace Operations*, p.35.

[49]Cf. Richard Gowan, *The Case for Cooperation in Crisis Management* (European Council on Foreign Relations, 2012), pp.6-8.

[50]Cf. Scott Sheeran and Stephanie Case, The Intervention Brigade: Legal Issues for the UN in the Democratic Republic of Congo (International Peace Institute, November 2014).

[51]Edward Burke, "Rebooting Ireland's commitment to UN peacekeeping."

[52]Sharland, *Counter-IED Technology*, p.11.

[53]Richard Gowan, "Diplomatic Fallout: UN's 'Intervention Brigade' raises costs of interference in DRC," *World Politics Review*, 8 April 2013.

[54]Lydia Lim, "Doubts linger over UN troops' preparedness to enter Mali," *Inter Press Service*, 5 July 2013.

[55]Boutellis, "Can the UN stabilize Mali?".

[56]As Karlsrud and Smith note: "The French Operation Barkhane has embedded liaison teams with the African TCCs during AFISMA that stayed on through the re-hatting; the Dutch have provided training to other TCCs on intelligence gathering and analysis; and the UN Mine Action Service provides counter-IED mentoring to TCCs. Possible future partnerships could include such things as jointly deploying European engineering or medical assets with African TCC engineers or medics." (*Europe's Return*, p.15).

[57]Cf. Walter Lötze, *Strengthening African Peace Support Operations: Nine Lessons for the Future of the African Standby Force* (ZIF, December 2013).

IRISH SOLDIERS BOARDING PLANE FROM BALDONNEL FOR CONGO AS PART OF THE 1960 UN MISSION. IN WHICH NINE WOULD DIE IN AN AMBUSH AT NIEMBA. ©IRISH TIMES

# REBOOTING IRELAND'S COMMITMENT TO UN PEACEKEEPING

by Edward Burke

**OPERATIONAL AND LOGISTICAL CONCERNS ABOUT UN PEACEKEEPING ARE NOT INSURMOUNTABLE IF LARGE, CAPABLE EUROPEAN COUNTRIES WORK TOGETHER AND DEPLOY TOGETHER, INCLUDING BY UNLOCKING INTER-ORGANISATIONAL FUNDING CONSTRAINTS THAT PREVENT EU BATTLEGROUPS FROM DEPLOYING ON UN MISSIONS.**

In an organisation as durable and complex as the United Nations, opportunities for reform do not come along very often. It is also singularly rare for Ireland to have a debate about its defence commitments. So 2015, the year when the UN conducts a review of peacekeeping operations and the Government prepares a White Paper on defence, must not go to waste.

And there is much work to do. Beneath the rituals of mutual congratulation seen during secretary-general Ban Ki-moon's recent visit to Dublin, questions are being asked about the health and future of the Irish-UN peacekeeping relationship. Long gone are the days when Irish soldiers would deploy to countries badly equipped and poorly briefed. Experiences of NATO and/or EU operations have raised expectations. Concepts of force protection – the ability to respond to attack and to retrieve casualties – have changed forever. In 2013, Ireland was the only European country willing to contribute to the UN disengagement observer force (UNDOF) on the Golan Heights between Syria and Israel.

Command and control of the mission broke down in August 2014 when lightly armed Filipino soldiers were attacked by Jabhat al-Nusra, a jihadi group operating in the area. The Filipinos alleged the UNDOF force commander ordered them to surrender, which they refused to do. Eventually the Filipinos soldiers, with Irish help, succeeded in escaping to safety.

Ill-equipped, poorly led peacekeepers implementing an outdated mandate – the story seemed a familiar one. But if the episode seemed a throwback to the darker days of UN peacekeeping in the last century, the response of the Defence Forces personnel on the ground and the Government in Dublin was markedly different to the resigned acceptance of previous Irish governments to bad news from the Congo or Lebanon.

The UN's performance was simply not good enough; Minister for Defence Simon Coveney argued for such a strict, conditions-based approach for future Irish contingents.

Over the past two years, I have consulted a number of officers of the Defence Forces for a report on the state of UN peacekeeping published by the Centre on International Co-operation at New York University.

## LOGISTICAL SUPPORT

They are all committed and experienced peacekeepers that have served all over the world, from Liberia to Lebanon to Timor Leste. They have been quick to praise the UN for its reforms. The organisation has come a long way since the peacekeeping disasters of the mid-1990s when poorly led, ill-equipped and uninformed peacekeepers were humiliated on operations in civil wars in Bosnia, Somalia and Rwanda: UN logistical support has improved, relations between peacekeepers and civilian agencies are better and the UN has tentatively begun to collect and analyse intelligence. But the same military officers are also deeply concerned that the UN is not keeping pace with Irish expectations for reform. They have highlighted three areas of particular importance.

**THERE IS AN ALMOST COMPLETE ABSENCE OF UN PEACEKEEPING DOCTRINE WHEN IT COMES TO THE TRAINING OF UN CONTINGENTS. WHAT LIMITED GUIDANCE EXISTS IS INADEQUATE AND UNREAD.**
**IRELAND PREPARES FOR UN MISSIONS USING NATO AND EU TRAINING DOCTRINE AND STANDARDS.**

First, there is an almost complete absence of UN peacekeeping doctrine when it comes to the training of UN contingents. What limited guidance exists is inadequate and unread. Ireland prepares for UN missions using Nato and EU training doctrine and standards. "Time lost" in mission learning UN concepts and operational structures remains a widespread problem for troop-contributing countries. Meanwhile, senior UN officers frequently redesign (or ignore) UN structures such as joint operations centres or joint mission analysis cells according to their preferences and previous experiences.

Second, UN contingents are often not tailored according to the mission environment and operational threats. According to one senior Irish officer, "The UN goes looking for the same battalion no matter what the mission."

And UN contingent standby arrangements remain "a lowest common denominator" – without any requirement for the diverse range of resources such as firepower or mobility – that may be required. "Mandate creep" is re-emerging as a significant problem. Poorly resourced peacekeeping missions struggle to fulfil the myriad duties expected of them.

Third, UN command and control arrangements are hampered by a lack of understanding of military requirements by UN civilian officials. Military officers often have no control over critical assets such as air-lift capabilities; they struggle to respond to quick-moving events. Meanwhile, the increasing use of civilian contracted air crew for peacekeeping missions places a very high "duty of care" barrier to using these assets for military operations – civilian contractors often do not allow their personnel to deploy to hostile areas. The lack of an operational headquarters or regional headquarters combined with the scarcity of military personnel in New York means that peacekeeping commanders spend much of their time talking to civilian officials in New York, trying to unblock political and logistical problems, instead of focusing on day-to-day military operations.

## MUTUAL DEPLOYMENT

Operational and logistical concerns about UN peacekeeping are not insurmountable if large, capable European countries work together and deploy together, including by unlocking inter-organisational funding constraints that prevent EU battlegroups from deploying on UN missions. Post-Afghanistan, senior military leaders such as the UK's chief of the defence staff, Gen Sir Nick Houghton, have called for a much greater European commitment to UN operations. Irish soldiers – with their recent experiences of UN, EU and Nato-led operations – are well-placed to advise on reforms that will address European concerns over UN operational deficiencies.

The year of 2015 and the UN review of peacekeeping chaired by Ramos Horta should mark a new era of European peacekeeping. Ireland can play an integral role.

This article was originally published by *The Irish Times* on July 10 2015

*Edward Burke* *is an associate fellow at the Foundation for International Relations and Foreign Dialogue. The report* *Walking Point for Peace: An Irish View on the State of UN Peacekeeping*, *co-authored with Jonathan Marley of the London School of Economics, is published by the* *Center on International Cooperation at NYU*

# EUROPEAN MILITARIES NEED TO PULL THEIR WEIGHT

by Richard Gowan

**EUROPEAN COUNTRIES SHOULD NOT SEE UN PEACEKEEPING AS PURELY HUMANITARIAN ENDEAVOR OR A "SOFT" ALTERNATIVE TO NATO OPERATIONS, BUT AS PART OF THE BROADER PICTURE OF TRANSATLANTIC BURDEN SHARING.**

Germany and its European allies are overburdened with problems ranging from the Greek crisis to the Ukrainian conflict. It is understandable that strengthening United Nations peace operations in remote trouble spots such as Côte d'Ivoire and Sudan is not very high up their agendas. But there are growing calls for European powers, and Germany in particular, to consider offering the UN more troops and military assets. These calls don't just come from inveterate peaceniks and lovers of the UN.

Earlier this month, a commission led by former German Defense Minister Volker Rühe published a report on German military deployments. The focus of the report is parliamentary oversight of the Bundeswehr. But it also raises concerns about the growing demands on UN operations. The UN has over 100,000 troops in missions worldwide. Most come from Africa and South Asia, and many lack advanced military equipment. This has been a major problem in places such as Mali and on the Golan Heights, where Islamist extremists have targeted the UN, killing peacekeepers or taking them hostage. If European governments want the UN to limit the rise of chaos in North Africa and the Middle East, it needs reinforcements.

The Rühe Commission predicts "the United Nations' need for high-value military capabilities will tend to rise further." It calls for a serious strategic debate on whether and how Germany should offer more forces to the UN. Similar debates are underway in other parts of Europe. The Netherlands and Nordic countries have already contributed intelligence officers, attack helicopters and transport aircraft to the UN mission in Mali. Britain is also exploring ways that it can do more for the UN.

Germany has itself experimented with new ways of supporting peacekeeping. It only has 200 personnel, including soldiers and police, on UN service. But it has also sent transport aircraft to Mali and established a field hospital near the capital, Bamako, as part of a small European Union mission operating alongside the UN.

## "NOT PULLING THEIR WEIGHT"

Yet, as the Global Peace Operations Review, a new online survey of UN and non-UN missions launched by the Center on International Cooperation this week, notes, many European militaries are still "not pulling their weight" in peacekeeping after Afghanistan. No NATO country figures among the top 25 contributors of personnel to blue helmet missions (Italy is number 26). European governments pay 40 percent of the costs of UN deployments - and nearly 100 percent of African Union operations such as the stabilization force in Somalia - but they could significantly boost these missions by offering their own drones, engineers, medical teams and other specialized assets.

**EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS PAY 40 PERCENT OF THE COSTS OF UN DEPLOYMENTS - AND NEARLY 100 PERCENT OF AFRICAN UNION OPERATIONS SUCH AS THE STABILIZATION FORCE IN SOMALIA - BUT THEY COULD SIGNIFICANTLY BOOST THESE MISSIONS BY OFFERING THEIR OWN DRONES, ENGINEERS, MEDICAL TEAMS AND OTHER SPECIALIZED ASSETS.**

Last week, the UN released a report by a high-level panel on peace operations that emphasizes that "it is crucial to reverse the decline in contributions from many high-capability countries." It is of course not surprising that a UN-backed panel should ask for more resources for UN missions. But other players, including the Obama administration, are also putting pressure on Europeans to raise their game.

## STRENGTHENING THE UN

Washington has been shocked by the UN's inability to handle crises like the rapid collapse of South Sudan in 2013, and angered by repeated reports that peacekeepers have failed to protect imperiled civilians in places like Darfur and the Democratic Republic of Congo. But, conscious that there are often few alternatives to blue helmet missions, President Barack Obama and his team have made strengthening the UN a priority for his final period in office. It hardly ranks alongside securing a nuclear deal with Iran, but the US is still investing political capital in the issue.

Last September, Vice President Joe Biden convened a summit in New York to encourage capable countries to boost their contributions to the UN. This September, Obama will host another meeting on the same theme. In a speech in Brussels previewing the summit earlier this year, US Ambassador to the UN Samantha Power praised the Dutch-led effort in Mali but lamented "the reality that European countries have drawn back from peacekeeping."

Strikingly, Power argued that European countries should not see UN peacekeeping as purely humanitarian endeavor or a "soft" alternative to NATO operations, but as part of the broader picture of transatlantic burden sharing. If Germany and its allies want continued American assistance in securing their eastern flank from renewed threats from Russia, they can surely do more to help stabilize Europe's southern flank through relatively light weight and low cost UN peacekeeping deployments.

## OUTDATED AND INEFFICIENT

This may make sense strategically, but it is still hard to persuade many European generals and politicians to take UN deployments seriously. The legacy of the disastrous missions in the Balkans and Rwanda remains strong. Even those European countries, such as Ireland, which have kept up their contributions to the UN over the years have long lists of complaints about the organization. A recent survey of Irish officers by Edward Burke and Jonathan Marley found that most see UN command and control systems as inefficient, peacekeeping force structures as outdated and UN doctrines as inferior to those of NATO and the European Union.

If European nations want to deploy more peacekeepers they will have to work through, or work around, these problems with the UN. It is possible to overcome such obstacles, even if it is not always easy. The Dutch-Nordic intelligence effort in Mali follows a NATO model, for example, as there is no UN template for such a unit.

But if countries like Germany want to have a strategic debate about their future role in UN peace operations, they should not get too bogged down in technicalities. The real question that faces them is whether they believe, in an increasingly unstable international environment, UN operations can make a credible contribution to their own security. Conflict zones like Mali and the Golan may not pose direct threats to German security, but instability in Africa and the Middle East is also linked to international terrorism, organized crime and uncontrolled migration flows. If Germany and its allies want to live in a stable neighborhood, UN missions can be part of the answer, and European militaries need to do more to make them succeed.

This article was originally published by the *Deutsche Welle* on June 24 2015

*Richard Gowan is a non-resident fellow at the Center on International Cooperation at NYU, where he was previously research director. He is also a fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations, teaches conflict resolution at Columbia's School of International and Public Affairs, and writes a weekly column ("Diplomatic Fallout") for World Politics Review. | Twitter: @RichardGowan1*

# MULTILATERAL ENVOYS

JAN ELIASSON, THE THEN SECRETARY-GENERAL'S SPECIAL ENVOY FOR DARFUR (FOURTH FROM LEFT AT THE TABLE), IN JANUARY 2007 MEETS INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS' REPRESENTATIVES IN THE UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN THE SUDAN (UNMIS) COMPOUND. ©UN PHOTO/FRED NOY

# LESSONS FROM MULTILATERAL ENVOYS

by Richard Gowan and Alischa Kugel

**IT IS SURELY SAFE TO SAY THAT THERE IS NO SINGLE PERFECT APPROACH TO RATIONALIZING AND GUIDING HYBRID MEDIATION PROCESSES. BUT THE MERE FACT THAT NEARLY TWO THIRDS OF THE ENVOYS IN OUR SURVEY ARE DEPLOYED ALONGSIDE ANOTHER MULTILATERAL ENVOY - TO SAY NOTHING OF NATIONAL, NON-GOVERNMENTAL AND LOCAL ACTORS - MEANS THAT THE RECURRENT CHALLENGES IN HYBRID MEDIATION CANNOT BE IGNORED.**

Mediation was a central concern for the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations convened in October 2014. The group had a deliberately broad mandate to review the UN's peacekeeping operations (PKOs) and Special Political Missions (SPMs). It was authorized to assess and advise on challenges to the Secretary-General's good offices and the "special and personal envoys of the Secretary-General" that are part of the broader category of SPMs. While the Panel discussed mediation issues in this context, it also had to consider how the UN's field-based political missions, regional offices and large-scale PKOs handle mediation issues. Additionally, its purview included the UN's partnerships with regional organizations and other actors, allowing the Panel to look at how UN operations coordinated with regional players in cases such as South Sudan.

The Panel was well-positioned to propose improvements to the ways in which the UN selects, deploys and backstops envoys and mediators; supports mediation in cases where PKOs and SPMs are deployed; and works with partners, including not only regional organizations but also individual states and international NGOs on mediation. This is, of course, only one of many areas ranging from Security Council mandates to logistics chains that the Panel was mandated to study. It had to juggle the concerns and interests of numerous different constituencies inside and outside the UN.

A basic question for the Panel was whether the UN can defend its traditional role as an impartial actor in conflict prevention and conflict resolution. This is crucial in a period in which the Security Council has requested a PKO to "neutralize" specific opponents (e.g., the Force Intervention Brigade in the DRC), and many SPMs work closely with non-UN-commanded peace enforcement missions.Can the UN retain its role as mediator in parallel with coercive measures authorized by the Council?

This question is further complicated by the need for a realistic assessment of how non-UN actors' mediation activities impact the work of UN peace operations. In many cases, hybrid mediation is clearly advantageous for the UN. Yet in several recent cases, such as South Sudan and Mali, blue helmet missions have been cut out of crucial political processes by regional actors despite having thousands of troops on the ground. What happens to a UN mission when it loses the political initiative in this way?

Considerable progress that has been made in terms of mediation support inside and outside the UN since 2000. The UN has strengthened its systems for deploying and sustaining PKOs in the wake of the 2000 Brahimi Report, and has taken significant steps to bolster SPMs. It has also expanded its support systems for envoys and mediators over the last fifteen years. The creation of the Mediation Support Unit and Mediation Standby Team – inspiring complimentary efforts in other regional organizations and in civil society – means that the UN is able to provide more consistent and professional support to political processes than previously capable.

Nonetheless, demands for such services from those working in the field is high. UN officials and friendly member states complain that mediation remains under-resourced. Strategic dilemmas confront the UN and other mediators in an increasingly fragmented international environment. There are obstacles to mediation, but there are also opportunities through partnerships with local actors in countries affected by conflict. How can the UN make best use of these relationships?

## THE ENVOYS PROJECT

The essays in this series are based on research a Center on International Cooperation (CIC), largely undertaken in 2014, on multilateral envoys.  CIC was lucky to have the advice and support of the Center in Humanitarian Dialogue as we designed and undertook this work (although the responsibility for the final conclusions is our own. As part of this research, CIC conducted interviews with the African Union (AU), Commonwealth, Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), European Union (EU), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Organisation internationale de la Francophonie (OIF), Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), and UN officials and also studied public material on other organizations. The Center for Humanitarian Dialogue provided considerable support for this work.

This research – based on a study of 50 envoys with a focus on addressing specific conflicts deployed by the UN, regional organizations and other multilateral organizations at the end of 2013 – only gives part of the picture of international mediation.As another recent study has emphasized, "**states still remain the single most important type of mediator**" while NGOs are also key actors in the field.Even when the UN and regional actors are involved in a conflict, they do not necessarily deploy a formal envoy.

But studying formally-appointed envoys does help raise three questions that, while hardly unfamiliar to the mediation community, may need some answers. First, what are the strategic demands on multilateral mediators today, and what organizations are taking the lead in response to these demands? Second, how professional and systematic is the support is these mediators receive? Third, what are the lessons for the UN in terms of collaborating with other actors in mediation processes?

## MULTILATERAL ENVOYS: A STRATEGIC PROFILE

As of late 2013, we identified 50 envoys meeting our criteria for dealing with specific conflicts mandated by the organizations covered by our study. Twenty-eight of these were working on a conflict where at least one other multilateral envoy was also active. Of these, sixteen were UN envoys; seven represented the African Union; eleven other African organizations; and sixteen other organizations. The concentration of multilateral activity in Africa is clear: 30 of the 50 individuals worked on the continent, in contrast to seven in the Asia-Pacific; six in the Middle East; five in Europe and two in the Americas. We are presently reviewing these figures to factor in the last year's events in Ukraine, the Middle East and Africa but we presume that the latter will remain the main focus of multilateral efforts.

Reflecting this trend, 24 of the envoys we covered at the time of this research were Africans themselves (and 22 of them are dealing with conflicts on the continent). Multilateral envoy-hood otherwise appears to be a distinctly European trade: seventeen of our subjects come from Europe, with the remainder largely coming from the Americas and Asia-Pacific. Of the UN-mandated envoys in the study, six were African and five were European. Such categorizations can obviously obscure key factors about the personalities involved: as an Algerian, for example, Lakhdar Brahimi features in our data as an African but his experience and networks in the Middle East, Europe and globally are essential to his political leverage.

> ## THE CONCENTRATION OF MULTILATERAL ACTIVITY IN AFRICA IS CLEAR: 30 OF THE 50 INDIVIDUALS WORKED ON THE CONTINENT, IN CONTRAST TO SEVEN IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC; SIX IN THE MIDDLE EAST; FIVE IN EUROPE AND TWO IN THE AMERICAS.

Nonetheless, the data emphasizes two points. The first is that, at least in the field of multilateral mediation, the mantra of "African solutions to African problems" is increasingly a reality. (As a point of comparison, five of the SRSGs currently leading UN PKOs in Africa are from the continent, whereas four **come from elsewhere**.)The second is that, in a global context where European power seems to be diminishing, Europeans punch above their weight in multilateral diplomacy. It is worth asking whether the increased tensions on Europe's borders will now absorb more of its best diplomats – and if there is a strategic case for expanding the pool of UN mediators from other regions. There is only one Asian and one Latin American citizen working as a UN envoy, SRSG or DSRSG dealing with conflict-related matters deployed in Africa at the present time.

The data also reaffirms the well-established observation that multilateral envoys typically deal with civil wars and their consequences: fully 26 in our sample were dealing with intra-state conflicts and transitional political processes in late 2013. Seven were dealing with conflicts involving non-state armed groups of various types, while seven more were focused on inter-state conflicts and six on land or border disputes between countries.

Again, these figures highlight a clear trend while obscuring a number of qualifying factors. They also obscure geographical factors, such as the absence of multilateral envoys from most Asian conflicts. A comparative study for this project by Teresa Whitfield emphasizes that multilateral envoys tend to be handling internationalized civil wars, whereas they are often excluded from more contained conflicts. Moreover, multilateral envoys have largely been excluded from mediating or facilitating peace talks with transnational Islamist extremist groups. Given the threat posed by such actors to peace operations and humanitarian efforts in cases like Libya, Mali and Syria, Whitfield's findings raise hard questions about how UN and non-UN mediators can adapt to current conflicts.

## MEDIATION SUPPORT AND PROFESSIONALIZATION

The growing challenges to multilateral envoys raise questions about how well-supported and professional these individuals are. Academic mediation analysts typically underline the importance of mid-level staff in managing peace processes. Senior multilateral envoys do not always defer to their juniors so readily. In the words of one international official interviewed during our work, "sometimes we take for granted that high profile people will know certain things . . . we need people who know all the daily nuts and bolts of the process, someone who knows all the discussions and the complexity. Otherwise we can miss a lot." Nonetheless, multilateral organizations (especially in Africa) continue to invest a great deal of trust in high-profile figures. The average age of the individuals in our sample was a little over 64 at the time the survey was completed – but depressingly, only three of the entire group were women.While there remains a strong case for involving senior figures as mediators, some African officials raised concerns about reliance on grandees: "They are limited in what they can do and bound by time constraints in a process that shouldn't be bound by time."

In this context, ensuring skilled and well-resourced nuts-and-bolts experts are in place to support mediation processes takes on additional importance. Whitfield argues that the UN's Mediation Support Unit (MSU) is "setting a standard" in this field through developing strategies and providing thematic advice on peace processes – in addition to acting as a "global asset" supporting mediation by non-UN actors. The Mediation Standby Team also plays a significant role. But, as noted above, diplomats and UN officials share concerns that the MSU and Standby Team are overloaded – and the need to liaise with non-UN actors frequently increases the strain.

For UN mediation to succeed, it needs strengthening of these centralized assets and a guarantee that individual UN mediators also have the staff and resources they require. Looking beyond the UN system, there is a further need to assess the state of mediation support within the UN's partner organizations. Whitfield notes that the EU, OSCE and Commonwealth have all made progress in this area but that the AU and ECOWAS have less well-developed assets. In the AU, for example, "the high level of most envoys means that they receive no formal training, and the literature, tools, management skills and knowledge developed in recent years are still quite scarcely used." The UN and non-governmental organizations still often provide considerable support to African-led peace initiatives, a fact reflected by projects such as AU-UN cooperation on drafting joint mediation guidelines.As these complex

mediation partnerships are developing, one question is how to best target the UN's assistance. Possible solutions include civil society organizations, who can play a role in providing advice on triangular cooperation between the UN, regional organizations (in Africa or elsewhere) and NGOs on matters ranging from policy formation to operational support.

## POLITICAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL CHALLENGES OF HYBRID MEDIATION

Any commentary on cooperation between the UN and non-UN actors in peace processes needs to address political as well organizational tensions. In many recent cases, cooperation has been marred by tensions between the UN and its partners. This certainly includes Darfur and Syria, where the UN has appointed joint mediators with, respectively, the AU and the Arab League. In such cases, as Alischa Kugel notes in her essay for this project, the joint envoy may receive "blurred" guidance from different institutions or "take initiatives into his/her own hands without communicating strategies to the organizations' oversight bodies."

It is surely safe to say that there is no single perfect approach to rationalizing and guiding hybrid mediation processes. But the mere fact that nearly two thirds of the envoys in our survey are deployed alongside another multilateral envoy - to say nothing of national, non-governmental and local actors - means that the recurrent challenges in hybrid mediation cannot be ignored.

How should the UN approach those cases where its mediators deploy alongside partners from other organizations, whether in a pre-arranged framework or an ad hoc fashion? And what of cases where field-based UN operations, whether SPMs or PKOs, operate in parallel with non-UN-led mediation processes? We have noted rising concerns with those cases, most prominently in Mali and South Sudan. UN PKOs are operating in volatile environments but are effectively cut out of related political talks. How long can the UN credibly undertake military and civilian tasks on the ground when its top-level political role is limited in this manner?

Further questions concern how a UN mediator works in conjunction with both non-UN political partners and a blue helmet PKO (most recently in the Great Lakes region with MONUSCO). Such arrangements may be operationally and politically useful or necessary on a case-by-case basis, but they risk obvious transaction costs. They also underline the questions about how to balance the political work of a UN mediator with the security activities of the peace operation. This is especially so when, as with MONUSCO, the latter is mandated to undertake coercive action against specific spoilers.There are no easy ways to resolve these dilemmas, but we hope this collection of essays on envoys makes a contribution to understanding the challenges involved as these issues are discussed and debated.

*Richard Gowan is a non-resident fellow at the Center on International Cooperation at NYU, where he was previously research director. He is also a fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations, teaches conflict resolution at Columbia's School of International and Public Affairs, and writes a weekly column ("Diplomatic Fallout") for World Politics Review. | Twitter: @RichardGowan1*

*Alischa Kugel is a consultant at the Center on International Cooperation at NYU and as a former Senior Program Officer at CIC was a contributor to and editor of this research. | Twitter: @AlischaKugel*

THEN UN SPECIAL ENVOY FOR DARFUR JAN ELIASSON (LEFT) AND AU SPECIAL ENVOY FOR DARFUR SALIM AHMED SALIM (CENTER) ARRIVE ON 14 FEBRUARY 2007 IN UM RAI FOR A MEETING WITH KEY COMMANDERS OF NON-SIGNATORY REBEL GROUPS TO THE DPA (DARFUR PEACE AGREEMENT). © UN PHOTO/TIM MCKULKA

# THREE'S A CROWD?  INTER-ORGANISATIONAL COOPERATION IN CONFLICT MEDIATION

by Alischa Kugel

**THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SUPPORT MECHANISMS REPRESENTS A SHIFT IN THE MANNER IN WHICH PEACEMAKING IS CONCEIVED AND CONDUCTED. WHILE THIS IS WELCOME, THE INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY TO PROVIDE EFFECTIVE SUPPORT HAS NOT YET CAUGHT UP WITH THE COLLECTIVE ASPIRATION TO OFFER IT.**

Out of the at least 51 multilateral envoys deployed in 2013 to address conflict situations around the world, 28 envoys from different multilateral institutions worked together in mediating conflicts in the same country, region or sub-region across Africa, Asia, Europe and the Middle East. With over half of multilateral envoys active in 2013 working alongside each other in various conflict settings, inter-organisational cooperation in conflict mediation is an increasing necessity. Cooperation in mediation processes involves a wide range of multilateral actors and can take different forms. Each presents advantages and disadvantages impacting both the actors involved and the respective mediation processes.

Using some recent mediation processes as examples, it is useful to review how envoys from different institutions have worked together by looking at their policies, guidance and mechanisms. Examining the detailed functioning of envoys lets us see their

strengths and weaknesses as well as how joint envoys that represent more than one institution can or cannot work together. Finally, in today's crowded mediation field, it is worth analyzing the benefits and drawbacks for envoys working with other actors that engage in mediation such as governments and private organisations, as well as actors from the wider UN system. To obtain a complete picture, it is important to study how envoys navigate these relationship, including with heads of peacekeeping operations and political missions, and actors in the development, human rights and humanitarian realm.

## COOPERATION BETWEEN ENVOYS FROM DIFFERENT ORGANIZATIONS

### WHY COOPERATION?

Mediation and good offices form part of the core tasks of the UN Secretary-General and his representatives, and the UN is the main actor in mediating inter- and intra-state conflicts. However, regional and sub-regional organisations play an increasingly important role in the peaceful settlement of conflicts. Their involvement is enshrined in Chapter VIII of the UN Charter, which states that the Security Council is to encourage pacific settlement of local disputes through regional arrangements or agencies.

Regional actors have unique advantages in local conflict resolution, including closer access to conflict situations as well as more knowledge of and leverage over conflict parties. In the last five to ten years, regional and sub-regional organisations, particularly in Africa but also in the Middle East, have taken a more prominent role in addressing political crises. In 2013-14, the African Union (AU) and the Economic Commission of West African States (ECOWAS) have worked together in addressing crises from Cote d'Ivoire to Guinea-Bissau to Mali, while the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) has engaged with the conflicts in Somalia and South Sudan. In the Middle East, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and the League of Arab States (LAS) played noticeable mediation roles in Yemen and Syria. The UN is increasingly working with regional organisations in different ways, including in a "lead role, in a supporting role, in a burden-sharing role, in sequential deployments and in several joint operations".

Whatever form cooperation takes, mediation actors need to agree on a lead actor by consulting early and in a transparent manner on existing organisational capacity, capabilities and available resources. This will allow informed decision-making on the division of labor based on comparative advantages. The *UN's Guidance for Effective Mediation* underlines that coherence, coordination and complementarity of mediation efforts is indispensable and recommends that cooperation should be based on "a common mediation strategy", ensuring "consistent messaging to the parties".

## ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

The involvement of envoys from different organisations in a mediation process has its benefits, as each actor and their respective institutions bring particular strengths which enable a division of responsibilities. Furthermore, each envoy can make unique contributions to a process by employing different skills and expertise to the various phases of a mediation process.

The April 2010 political crisis in Kyrgyzstan, in which the government was overthrown, illustrates the advantages of cooperation between different organisations in mediation. In the aftermath of the crisis the UN worked alongside special envoys of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the EU in mediating between the conflict parties. The engagement was coordinated through an OSCE-initiated tripartite mechanism, called the "Troika," which included the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office and the EUSR for Central Asia, as well as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) and head of the UN's regional office for Central Asia.

Both the OSCE and the EU's mediation roles were constrained during the crisis. The OSCE, which maintains centers in all five Central Asian countries (including a field presence in Kyrgyzstan in place since 1999), was able to make use of its extensive network of contacts with government officials and civil society. However, its role in mediating the crisis was hampered by the OSCE chair at the time, a position held by Kazakhstan, which was perceived by some Kyrgyz actors as biased. Similarly, the EU, which had deployed an EUSR to the region since 2005 and was able to play a useful advocacy role, was seen by some Kyrgyz political actors as an outsider with a Western political agenda. The UN in turn was perceived as an unbiased actor with the additional ability to leverage its capabilities in facilitating the conditions necessary for humanitarian response and mobilization of resources.

By working closely together, these three actors were able to pool together their respective strengths. In addition, the Troika sent consistently unified messaging that lent legitimacy to the transitional government and reinforced a united stance on the need for stability and respect for human rights. Through their successful cooperation, the Troika achieved sustained international attention on the conflict and contributed to preventing a deterioration of the situation in Kyrgyzstan.

More recently, the UN, AU and ECOWAS successfully joined efforts in mediating a return to constitutional order in Mali following the March 2012 coup. The organisations continue to work together in finding a political solution for the conflict that ensued in the country's north. And in Yemen, the UN's Special Advisor worked closely with the Gulf Cooperation Council in facilitating the latter's power-sharing agreement that led to a relatively peaceful hand-over of power in February 2012.

## WHEN ELEPHANTS FIGHT, IT IS THE GRASS THAT SUFFERS

However, inter-organisational cooperation in mediation can also bring disadvantages that at their worst jeopardize the very processes they were supposed to support. Deciding on a lead actor can pose the first hurdle to effective cooperation. A leaked exchange between two US state department officials over why the UN and not the EU should lead efforts to oversee a political transition in Ukraine in early 2014, illustrated that **decision-making on the lead actor is a sensitive political process** that is often driven by the interests of influential countries. Complicating matters, the UN Charter does not offer clear guidance on the question of whether it is **the world organisation or regional organisations that should take the lead in mediation efforts**. Further, the 2009 **report of the Secretary-General on enhancing mediation and its support activities** acknowledges that there is no clear framework for effective decision-making between the UN and regional organisations regarding partnership arrangements.

The risks in failing to establish a clear lead are manifold. Organisations with diverging interests may launch parallel processes in competing for a mediation role, creating an "opportunity for forum shopping as intermediaries are played off against one another. Such a fragmented international response reinforces fragmentation in the conflict and complicates resolution." In Cote d'Ivoire following the disputed 2010 presidential elections, the AU and ECOWAS both engaged in parallel mediation processes that had contrary approaches to the crisis. While ECOWAS, along with the UN, took a firm stance on the need for the incumbent Laurent Gbagbo to yield power to Alassane Ouattara, the AU's envoy, former South African president Thabo Mbeki, insisted on a power-sharing agreement between the two. Though the AU soon endorsed the ECOWAS decision to recognize Ouattara as the winner, divisions on the way forward within the AU mediation panel, **particularly driven by South Africa**, persisted. Responding to the persistent differences, then-**ECOWAS president James Victor Gbeho warned of a lack of unity in the approach** to the crisis and charged that these actions undermined ECOWAS's mediation efforts.

Even with an established lead in the mediation effort, lack of coordination on the way forward among stakeholders as well as the lack of a coherent mediation strategy can still prove problematic. Following the military coup in Guinea-Bissau in April 2012 that took place just ahead of the presidential elections, ECOWAS took over the lead in mediating an agreement for the return to civilian rule. The mediation efforts achieved an agreement wherein the junta ceded power to a transitional civilian government, which, however, did not include any members of the government overthrown in the April coup. The ECOWAS agreement created deep divisions between national and international stakeholders that either supported the transitional government or wanted to see a return to constitutional order with the authorities in place prior to the coup. The differences were particularly stark between ECOWAS and the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP), which wanted to see a resumption of the presidential vote.

The failure to agree on a common strategy further emboldened some political actors to refuse compromise, halting domestic political progress. In addition, the unease with which the agreement was received among the international community made it difficult for the transitional government to receive broad recognition, which affected its ability to mobilize resources for the transitional period.

## WAYS TOWARD IMPROVED COORDINATION

These setbacks notwithstanding, cooperation in mediation processes, as mentioned in the introduction of this essay, is increasingly common. This is in part due to the growing assertiveness of regional organisations to address conflicts in their respective areas of influence. In recognition, the UN and regional organisations have begun institutionalizing processes to enhance cooperation in mediation. These include exchanges between organisations on **lessons learned and best practices**, including joint training exercises that help to build stronger ties between organisations and enhance cohesion.

The UN has also entered into partnership agreements with several regional and sub-regional organisations including the AU, EU, OSCE, OAS, CARICOM, ECOWAS, SADC, ASEAN and OIC. These relationships aim to strengthen mediation capacities and enhance "**more coherent and complementary approaches in specific mediation processes**". These partnerships range from multiyear programs with "institutionalized cooperation procedures such as desk-to-desk interactions" to more flexible approaches like joint deployments. Meanwhile, the AU's Peace and Security Council Protocol, under Article 16, **provides a framework to enhance the AU's cooperation on peacemaking activities** with other regional organisations, aiming to promote effective continental mediation and conflict prevention measures.

The most advanced formalized cooperation agreement to date exists between the UN and AU in the form of draft **joint mediation guidelines**. These aim to enhance the sharing of information, as well as the coordination of policy and strategy to make joint mediation efforts more coherent. The guidelines are intended to help map out the organisations' core competencies. Work on the joint guidelines began in 2008, with a first draft completed by 2010. The process, however, was marred by disagreements between the AU and UN over the electoral dispute in Cote d'Ivoire in 2010/11 and between the UN and NATO and the AU over the use of force in response to the crisis in Libya in 2011. These difficulties notwithstanding, the AU **recently proposed in its submission for the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO)** that the two organisations should revisit these guidelines with the aim of finalizing and adopting them.

## JOINT ENVOYS

The closest type of institutional cooperation takes the form of joint envoys that represent more than one institution. This form of cooperation between institutions is fairly new and examples are few and far between. In 2013, there were only two joint envoys: Mohamed Ibn Chambas, the Joint African Union-United Nations Special Representative for Darfur, and Joint Chief Mediator and Lakhdar Brahimi, the Joint Special Representative of the United Nations and the League of Arab States for Syria. The position for the AU-UN Joint Mediator was established in 2008, while the UN-LAS post was created four years later in 2012. An earlier example of a joint envoy not involving the UN includes the AU/SADC Envoy to Madagascar, appointed in 2009.

The main advantage of a joint envoy is the added political weight the position receives through the representation of two institutions. Regional organisations are likely to be more familiar with the conflict and benefit from access to and influence over conflict parties, while the UN's participation signals the attention of the international community to the conflict, and the direct involvement of the Security Council that can take wide ranging punitive measures if needed.

The appointment of a joint envoy can also be used to refocus international attention on a country's situation. For example, the establishment of the AU-UN Joint Mediator position that combined the previously separate UN and AU envoy positions to the Darfur conflict was conceived as part of an effort to revive momentum toward achieving a resolution. The appointment can also come out of a compromise with the parties involved. For the Darfur conflict, the government of Sudan reportedly wanted to see an African-led process and was reluctant to accept the UN's role, while the AU lacked the necessary instructional capacity to take on a larger role. The Joint mediator position provided a solution that worked for all stakeholders.

> ## MEDIATORS AND ENVOYS HAVE LONG RELIED ON A COMBINATION OF A SMALL, UNIFIED TEAM AND THE CAPACITY TO CALL ON SPECIALIST KNOWLEDGE FROM OUTSIDE WHEN APPROPRIATE.

Joint setup also enables a division of labor according to the respective institutions' comparative advantages in the conflict setting, as well as the sharing of support functions and overall financing. The UN-LAS envoy, for example, received support in exercising his mandate from two deputies, each appointed by one of the two organisations, and held an office in Cairo, the headquarter location of the LAS.

However, the joint envoy model can also prove difficult. Regional actors may feel marginalized in the decision making process at the Security Council, which is ultimately determined by the five permanent members. Once the LAS brought the Syria crisis to the attention of the Security Council, for example, the League's influence over the process was hampered – even with the establishment of the position of the joint envoy – and meaningful progress was obstructed by China and Russia. There may also be a blurred understanding of responsibilities toward the respective organisations from one side of a joint envoy. In 2011, the AU voiced concern that despite repeated instructions from its Peace and Security Council, **the then-Joint Mediator did not liaise or coordinate efforts with the other AU mediation entities on the ground**. The AU specifically requested the Joint Mediator

to consult with it before taking further decisions, and both the AU and the UN requested **the Joint Mediator to provide a comprehensive report on his activities and any future plans**, indicating a clear lack of such consultations previously.

While the reporting practices and level of cooperation with other entities on the ground can depend on an envoy's personal approach to their work, the joint deployments setup may put one or both organisations at a disadvantage. It may also expose a lack of coordination between the organisations' headquarters that can encourage joint envoys to take initiatives into their own hands without communicating to the organisations' respective oversight bodies. The lack of consensus on a political strategy between the organisations can also send confusing messages to an envoy that at worst can paralyze a process. Close and effective cooperation between organisations deploying a joint envoy is therefore paramount to avoid "**a clash of political or bureaucratic approaches**".

## COOPERATION WITH OTHER ACTORS ON THE GROUND

Envoys rarely operate alone in a specific conflict setting. In the majority of cases, along with the likely presence of actors from regional and sub-regional organisations there frequently already exists a network of UN Country Teams (UNCTs), civil society groups, international NGOs, private diplomacy and bilateral actors. Mediation is also not an exclusive task for envoys. Heads of peacekeeping operations and political missions conduct good office functions on behalf of the Secretary-General and support compliance with and implementation of peace agreements.

In countries where the UN does not have a political presence, it increasingly relies on UNCTs for political analysis, but also for early warning, prevention and early engagement to address tensions on the ground. It is important to note here that the political engagement by UNCTs is limited, as they don't have a mediation mandate. Similarly, NGOs and civil society groups can provide crucial analysis on the potential and actual impacts of a situation on the ground and make recommendations on further action for the international community. Furthermore, both individual states that act as third-party intermediaries and private diplomacy actors can play an important role in early engagement with conflict parties, as they can react quickly, discreetly and with flexibility. Private diplomacy actors may have the added advantage of being perceived by the conflict parties as not pursuing their own agenda, and can thus be more acceptable to the parties involved. They do, however, lack the influence over conflict parties that individual states or multilateral institutions may have.

Once an agreement is reached, the various actors – particularly field missions, UNCTs, NGOs and civil society groups – assist through the provision of technical knowledge and local expertise in implementing the various aspects of a peace agreement. These can range from security sector reform efforts and rebuilding institutions to national reconciliation and reviving the economic sector. **Local partners can also be key in generating pressure on domestic elites**, mobilizing constituencies and sustaining pressure for peace on the national and sub-national level. In working with local civil society groups, it is important to be aware of their possible connection with the government or opposition parties. One of the main challenges is thus to ensure a balanced representation of groups in order to avoid a biased approach.

At times the presence of a multitude of actors can lead to a maze of fragmented peacemaking efforts, inhibiting a clear definition of roles and hindering effective cooperation and coordination. **Teresa Whitfield recounts that in Nepal**, between 2002 and 2006, in addition to UN involvement,

... international NGOs engaged in peace efforts ... included the Carter Center, the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, Crisis Management Initiative, Community of Sant'Egidio, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, International Alert, International IDEA, Transcend and the US Institute for Peace. In addition, there were workshops organized in Denmark, Finland, Germany, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the United States, as well as in Nepal; ... and offers of specific help in mediation from the governments of Norway and Switzerland.

It is important to note, however, that a number of these actors, particularly those that engaged in the conflict over the longer term, were able to make significant contributions to peacemaking efforts in Nepal.

The various actors on the ground are thus vital interlocutors for an envoy, who can make use of their knowledge and expertise to make progress on political processes and ensure the implementation of agreements. Mary Robinson, the then-UN Envoy for the Great Lakes region, tapped into the existing network of women's groups in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and the region to build an "inclusive peace dialogue" aimed at **ensuring women's participation in peacebuilding efforts**. In addition to the AU Special Representative of the African Union and the European Union Senior Coordinator for the Great Lakes Region the Envoy also worked closely with the US Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region and the DRC on implementing the Peace, Security, and Cooperation (PSC) Framework Agreement. **The U.S.'s long-standing diplomatic and security engagement in the region**, its important role as a bilateral donor to the DRC, and its considerable influence within international financial institutions that provide funding and technical assistance to the DRC government, allowed the US Special Envoy to exert considerable influence over the process and makes him an important partner in its implementation.

## IT IS HOWEVER, PREMATURE TO DECLARE THE EMERGENCE OF MEDIATION SUPPORT STRUCTURES AND MECHANISMS AS AN UNQUALIFIED SUCCESS.

In some cases, envoys may also leverage peacekeeping operations, political missions or UNCTs to their advantage. In the DRC, **Mary Robinson fully supported the military offensive by the UN's Force Intervention Brigade against the M23 rebels in the DRC**, which through its military gains has enabled advances on the diplomatic track. In addition, Robinson and the head of the UN Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO), Martin Kobler, collaborate closely and have daily interactions on approaches to developments on the ground. The presence of liaison officers in MONUSCO and the Envoy's office in Nairobi, respectively, further ensures their linkage and close cooperation.

Envoys with regional mandates frequently coordinate their efforts with relevant UNCTs to harmonize political, security and development approaches to specific crises. The Great Lakes region once again serves as a good example, where the UN Special Envoy initiated the close involvement of UNCTs in the implementation of the PSC framework. Since then, country teams in the signature countries agreed on each others' specific role in the framework's implementation and laid out a plan to move forward.

As with the other cases discussed, effective cooperation lies at the core of a fruitful relationship between envoys and other actors on the ground. Successful linkages to these actors can influence peace processes from the early stages to the implementation of peace agreements – even after the envoy's engagement has concluded. Crucial also is the necessary support and buy-in from headquarters, which often have to overcome existing divisions between departments to enable collaboration on the ground.

## THREE'S A CROWD, OR THREE'S COMPANY?

The deployment of multilateral envoys is an important and effective tool in civilian crisis management. But mediation is no longer an exclusive task carried out by the UN. With the increased engagement by regional actors and the presence of actors on the ground making critical contributions to peacemaking efforts, effective cooperation between multilateral envoys is vital for effective engagement in a conflict. Only well-coordinated efforts can bring the benefits that international cooperation has to offer.

*Alischa Kugel is a consultant at the Center on International Cooperation at NYU and as a former Senior Program Officer at CIC was a contributor to and editor of this research. | Twitter: @AlischaKugel*

ZHANYBEK KARIBZHANOV, SPECIAL ENVOY OF THE OSCE CHAIRPERSON-IN-OFFICE, DISCUSSES THE CURRENT SITUATION IN KYRGYZSTAN WITH THE INTERIM DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER, 9 APR 2010. (OSCE/MALIK ALYMKULOV) ©OSCE

# CHOOSING ENVOYS WISELY

by Bart M.J. Szewczyk

**SINCE THE OVERALL POLICY OBJECTIVES OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND PEACEBUILDING ARE COMMON TO THE SURVEYED ORGANIZATIONS, AND THE SPECIFIC ENVOYS AND EXPERTS SOMETIMES WORK ACROSS VARIOUS INSTITUTIONS, THERE IS GREAT POTENTIAL VALUE IN FURTHER STUDY OF THE ROLE OF SPECIAL ENVOYS.**

Special envoys are, by definition, agents appointed by a principal or a group of principals for a particular task. Yet their scope of power and authority varies across institutions. Different international organizations have made distinct decisions in terms of selecting special envoys; defining their mandates; deploying, financing and supporting an envoy's support team; and establishing report and oversight mechanisms. These formal decisions occur in the context of informal customary practices, which are for the most part beyond the scope of this study.

Whether by design, default or accident, these constitutive choices become more apparent through a systemic analysis across international organizations and across stages of the institutional process of envoys. Each of these steps is an opportunity for the principals to create and maintain control over their special envoys in order to achieve desired policy objectives. Conversely, inattention to the overall structure in which envoys operate can lead to unintended consequences.

## SELECTION

The selection of special envoys has two types. Within some institutions, envoys are chosen by a wide group of political stakeholders. In other organizations, they are appointed directly by the head of an institution, although there may also be informal consultations and vetting with other relevant actors.

Within the European Union, EU Special Representatives (EUSR) are appointed by the Foreign Affairs Council (the EU national ministers for foreign affairs, defense and development who meet collectively on a monthly basis) at the suggestion of the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HR), who also chairs the Council's meetings. While there is no formal nomination process, the HR generally leads the process. The ten current EUSRs act as the "voice" and "face" for the EU on specific policy areas. Generally, EUSRs tend to be selected from among diplomats and foreign policy experts rather than political leaders, with the notable exception of a few EUSRs in Bosnia such as Paddy Ashdown (former head of the Liberal Democrats party in the United Kingdom) or Miroslav Lajčák (former foreign minister of Slovakia).

Similarly, the African Union special envoys (titled variously as special representative, special envoy, high representative and chairperson) are selected by the Peace and Security Council (PSC) and the AU Commission Chairperson. The PSC, patterned on the structure of the UN Security Council, has fifteen members elected by the AU Assembly for two- or three-year terms. AU special envoys tend to be former African heads of state or government, such as Thabo Mbeki of South Africa or Alpha Konaré of Mali.

### THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SPECIAL ENVOYS DEPENDS ON HAVING THE POLITICAL SUPPORT AND CONFIDENCE OF CONSTITUENTS BEYOND THE APPOINTING HEADS.

In the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), a trade bloc of eight countries in Eastern Africa, special envoys are appointed through an endorsement of their nomination by respective member states. Notably, IGAD representatives have been appointed in pairs for each conflict (in Somalia, Sudan and South Sudan), providing a potential tension in the unity of institutional representation.

Uniquely, the Quartet Representative, currently Tony Blair (former UK prime minister), was selected by the Quartet Principals: UN Secretary-General, U.S. Secretary of State, Russian foreign minister and EU High Representative. Although this institutional model is an outlier in the analyzed group of special envoys, it also illustrates the range of possibilities of institutional representation whereby one individual is a multi-hatted envoy of actors relevant to the particular conflict.

In contrast to the EU and AU, special envoys at other international organizations tend to be chosen by the respective institutional heads. Sometimes, leaders of multilateral organizations find it useful to appoint an envoy informally for a particularly sensitive mission, allowing the scope for plausible deniability in case that becomes necessary.

At the UN, the Secretary-General has the sole prerogative of appointing special representatives, envoys, and advisers. In practice, however, the selection is made after an informal process of consultation with actors relevant to a particular situation, such as partner countries, warring armed groups and other governments and international actors. The selection of the different types of special appointees is oftentimes communicated to the Security Council by letter from the Secretary-General to the President of the Council, who then acknowledges the selection. There are currently over 50 special envoys, representatives and advisers to the Secretary-General. These are also sometimes dual-hatted as head of mission to a particular country.

In NATO, the Secretary-General has periodically appointed special representatives for specific issues, such as women, peace and security (in 2012) or for the regions of the Caucasus and Central Asia (in 2014). In these two cases, both individuals had already been serving within NATO, one as a deputy ambassador to NATO and the other as NATO's spokesperson.

At the OSCE, special representatives are selected by the Chairperson-in-Office, a position which rotates every year among foreign ministers of OSCE member states. The current thirteen OSCE special envoys, more like the EUSRs rather than the AU special envoys, are generally drawn from diplomatic and military services. The OAS Secretary-General appoints representatives from among OAS permanent staff, outside diplomats or political leaders, such as Bill Richardson (former governor of New Mexico and U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations). At the time of writing, there were five OAS special envoys.

Likewise, the International Organization of la Francophonie (OIF) has two special envoys appointed by the OIF Secretary-General. Both are political leaders from their respective countries, Belgium and the Ivory Coast. In the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Commission President selects special envoys, of whom there are currently five. The Commonwealth of Nations had three special envoys in 2013, selected by the Commonwealth Secretary-General at the recommendation of the Political Affairs Division, as determined by consultation between the Good Offices Section and the relevant Regional Section.

It is unclear to what extent the choice between the two types of selection processes has practical consequences. Generally, envoys selected by a group of principals could claim greater authority because they represent a larger constituency. Perhaps for this reason, envoys are sometimes dual-hatted or even multi-hatted by several organizations, although in practice they are likely to have one primary institution as the lead principal. But presumably, even when a special envoy is directly appointed by the head of an international institution, that head is responsible to a wider group of actors. Moreover, the effectiveness of special envoys depends on having the political support and confidence of constituents beyond the appointing heads. Nonetheless, these informal channels of control can be more uncertain than the formal power to select an envoy, or block his appointment in the first place.

Upon being selected, a special envoy's marching orders are enclosed in the mandate of appointment, another mechanism through which principals can guide their representatives' scope of action toward desired outcomes.

## MANDATE

Not surprisingly, mandates of special envoys are generally determined by the principals that select them. For instance, the EU Foreign Affairs Council (and the EU High Representative), the AU Peace and Security Council (and the AU Commission Chairperson), the IGAD Council of Ministers, and the Quartet set forth the jurisdiction and policy guidance for special envoys through resolutions. At the UN, the Departments of Political Affairs and Peacekeeping Operations negotiate the terms of reference for the Secretary-General's approval. The final mandate documents are typically confidential until released by the UN. Within the OSCE, mandates

are defined by the Chairpersons-in-Office in the official appointment letters. The OAS General Secretariat develops mandates for its special envoys, sometimes also in consultation with a host government. At the OIF, the Secretary-General defines the terms of reference on the basis of an evaluation undertaken by the Peace, Democracy, and Human Rights Department and in accordance with the OIF foundational legal document, the Declaration of Bamako. In ECOWAS, mandates are set by the Commission President on the advice of the Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace & Security. In the Commonwealth, the Good Offices Section, in consultation with the Regional Section, develops the terms of reference, which are then approved by the Secretary-General after making any necessary amendments.

Mandates vary in their level of specificity and comprehensiveness. In some cases, particularly within the EU, they can be highly detailed and include instructions regarding policy objectives and priorities, strategy and tactics, implementation, reporting, and oversight. In other cases, the constitutive documents appointing special envoys are more general in describing a representative's role. In terms of duration, some mandates are open-ended, whereas other organizations such as the EU and the Commonwealth generally have a specified time limit after which a mandate is terminated, reviewed or extended.

To be sure, there are benefits and burdens inherent in each approach. Detailed mandates ensure greater mission clarity and can serve to exercise greater control over envoys by their principals. Moreover, within groups of principals such as the EU Foreign Affairs Council and the AU Peace and Security Council, codifying an envoy's strategy can help prevent unilateral attempts by some principals to shift the strategy in their preferred direction after agreement has been reached.

## CRISIS SITUATIONS NORMALLY DO NOT ALLOW FOR REFLECTION ON THE OVERALL INSTITUTIONAL PROCESS ESTABLISHED TO SELECT, MANDATE, DEPLOY, FINANCE, SUPPORT AND OVERSEE SPECIAL ENVOYS.

On the other hand, crisis situations that lead to the appointment of special envoys in the first place can be unpredictable and are not amenable to precise instructions. Less tactical detail provides greater operational flexibility within the overall policy objectives. Particularly where special envoys are directly appointed by the head of an international organization, mandates can be defined as much by informal and unwritten understandings and expectations. These can have the benefit of greater flexibility, as opposed to more rigid formal constitutive documents.

## DEPLOYMENT, FINANCING AND SUPPORT

The extent of deployment, financing and support of special envoys depends on the particular mission and institution. Within the EU, budgets and team sizes of special envoys are typically established by the Council decision document appointing the envoy and setting forth the mandate. EUSRs are supported by geographic units within the European External Action Service, as well as by EU delegations in the particular countries covered by special envoys. The existence of EUSRs alongside heads of EU delegation can lead to friction in cooperation and a lack of mission unity. Indeed, the current model is under review and may be replaced by double-hatting specific EU ambassadors as EUSRs. Were the current arrangement to change, however, EU member states acting

through the EU Foreign Affairs Council would lose their direct financial control over EUSR budgets, which would then be absorbed into the overall EEAS budget.

At the UN, a specially-designated Mediation Support Unit (MSU) was established in 2006 to provide envoys with proper staff assistance and advice. Envoys are financed in one of three ways: raising new funds from governments; through the Secretary-General's Unforeseen Fund; or by reallocating funds approved biannually from the special political mission budget. Staffing is mostly by officials from within the UN Secretariat through a recruitment process coordinated by MSU in consultation with the Departments of Political Affairs and Peacekeeping Operations. MSU also manages a UN Standby Team of Mediation Experts, an "on call" group of advisors that can assist envoys on their missions.

Like the UN, IGAD has a Mediation Support Unit, which is currently finalizing the roster of prospective mediators and a list of technical experts ready for deployment. Missions are financed through direct fund-raising efforts with IGAD development partners or, in the case of preventative diplomacy efforts, under projects already funded at the secretariat level in the IGAD Peace and Security Division. Similarly, ECOWAS is establishing a Division of Mediation Facilitation to coordinate a standby roster of experts and support envoy missions with advisors. ECOWAS missions are financed mainly through the community levy paid by member states.

In the OSCE, the Conflict Prevention Centre has a Mediation Support Team, which supports the work of envoys through training, retreats, debriefings, expert deployments and operational support. Although there is no standby unit of envoys, there is a roster of OSCE officials who have indicated their willingness to be deployed as "first responders" in support of crisis response actions. The OSCE also maintains a roster of external mediation experts who can be deployed in support of mediation and dialogue facilitation efforts. Envoys are financed either by the country holding the chairmanship in a given year or as part of the general OSCE budget.

The Quartet Representative employs about twenty advisors, as well as administrative and security staff. The team is financed through the UN Development Programme by the U.S., the European Commission, Norway, Canada, UK, New Zealand, Australia and Netherlands. Policy experts are either seconded by partner countries and institutions, or employed directly by the Representative. Notably, the current Representative, Tony Blair, does not receive any compensation for his work nor reimbursement for travel expenses; however, when in Jerusalem, he receives lodging and meals.

Within the AU, funding for envoy missions comes from the general AU Peace Fund or, more commonly, from partners' contributions (in particular, the European Commission, Denmark, UK and Spain). Envoys have experts working on a six- to twelve-month contract basis, some of whom are seconded from governments and other international institutions. Although there is no standby unit equivalent to the UN MSU, the AU has desk officers that help as experts.

The other institutions in this study—NATO, OIF, Commonwealth, and OAS— have neither any standby rosters of envoys nor experts, but support envoy missions with staff from the particular organization. They finance missions through their general budgets.

## REPORTING AND OVERSIGHT

Report and oversight mechanisms flow to the principals that select and mandate envoys in the first place. For instance, EUSRs formally report to the EU Foreign Affairs Council as well as the High Representative, who can propose to the Council to terminate a special representative's mandate. Similarly, the AU special envoys report to the AU Commission Chairperson and the Peace and Security Council, as well as the UN Security Council if the envoy is dual-hatted with the UN. Within the UN itself, special envoys report directly to the Secretary-General following the informal process of consultation that precedes their selection. They also brief the Security Council, the General Assembly and other actors relevant to a particular situation. At IGAD, special envoys report to the IGAD Summit and liaise with member states' high-level authorities in order to conduct their business.

The Quartet Representative regularly updates Quartet Principals on any developments. In addition, his head of mission updates the local representatives of the Quartet through regular meetings and teleconferences with their staff on the ground in Jerusalem and Ramallah, and during visits to capitals.

In ECOWAS, special envoys report to the Commission President on a monthly basis, and sometimes more frequently during crises. Similarly, the Commonwealth special envoys submit reports after each mission visit and, at the conclusion of an assignment, each envoy is required to write a final report with assessments and recommendations. These confidential reports are submitted to the Commonwealth Secretary-General and are also available to the Political Affairs Division. While envoys have no obligation to report to member states, they may brief regional countries and representatives of member states serving on the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group as a matter of courtesy. Within NATO, OAS and OIF, special envoys report to the respective secretaries-general and, in addition, may brief member states depending on the perceived need.

Envoys who are dual-hatted or multi-hatted report to their respective institutions, although in practice there is likely to be one organization that is the lead principal. And even envoys that represent a single organization are likely to be more effective if they are able to brief multiple actors relevant to a particular situation.

## CONCLUSIONS

Crisis situations normally do not allow for reflection on the overall institutional process established to select, mandate, deploy, finance, support and oversee special envoys. Moreover, some design choices such as appointment and oversight are likely to reflect the political structure of a given organization and may be relatively inflexible to change.

Yet, as this brief study shows, there is a range of design choices available to international institutions with respect to the role of special envoy. In particular, given the contemporary ubiquity of special envoys, multilateral organizations could consider establishing permanent budgetary lines to support their activities. Additionally, mediation support units established at the UN and AU are useful institutional models in providing both a readily available roster of potential envoys and policy advisors able to staff and support them. Some crises may necessarily demand ad hoc approaches or require outside experts, but such rosters at the very least provide good default options.

The surveyed institutions also cover the spectrum of choices with respect to mandates, from general to granular and from public to private. An envoy's terms of reference are instrumental not only to controlling his or her conduct and guiding it in the direction of a principal's desired policy objectives, but can also communicate to a wider constituency the principal's strategy in a particular situation and the scope of the envoy's authority.

On the other hand, some situations may require less disclosure and more discretion, in which case the appointment of an informal special envoy might be considered. Utilized by some international institutions, informal envoys can provide their principals with the same intelligence-gathering and mediation functions, but under the cover of plausible deniability in case a principal perceives a need. Informal envoys are likely to be more feasible in multilateral organizations, in which the institutional head appoints the representatives directly, rather than in institutions such as the EU and AU, where a group of political stakeholders is responsible for selecting envoys. Nonetheless, even those institutions might consider the potential utility of informal representation if the required confidentiality could be maintained.

To be sure, none of the specific choices with respect to special envoys are necessarily linked to their ultimate effectiveness. But their continued and growing use should trigger additional attention to the various phases of the institutional process of special envoys so that the overall structure reflects greater design rather than default or accident. Moreover, there is likely to be significant room for intellectual exchange among the various international institutions regarding their experiences with special envoys and any lessons learned. Since the overall policy objectives of conflict resolution and peacebuilding are common to the surveyed organizations, and the specific envoys and experts sometimes work across various institutions, there is great potential value in further study of the role of special envoys.

*Bart M.J. Szewczyk is a member of the Policy Planning Staff, Office of the Secretary of State, U.S. Department of State. This article was written and submitted before the author joined the State Department. The views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the U.S. government.*

LEILA ZERROUGUI (LEFT), THEN SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR CHILDREN AND ARMED CONFLICT, GREETS A CHILD ON HER TOUR OF THE PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS SITE 23 JUNE 2014, JUBA, SOUTH SUDAN ©UN MULTIMEDIA

# MEET THE ENVOYS: TRENDS IN ENVOY PROFILES AND APPOINTMENTS

by Nora Gordon

**WITH MULTILATERAL INSTITUTIONS' GROWING EMPHASIS ON CONFLICT PREVENTION, EFFORTS TO SELECT ENVOYS OF DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS AND WITH A WIDE RANGE OF SKILLS WILL BE EVEN MORE CRUCIAL IN THE FUTURE.**

Since the first UN mediator, Count Folke Bernadotte, was appointed in 1948 to serve as UN Mediator in Palestine, multilateral institutions have increasingly deployed envoys to mediate conflicts between and within countries, and more recently conflicts involving non-state actors. In 2013, some 52 multilateral envoys were working in 29 locations around the world. How does Count Bernadotte stand in comparison with these 52 envoys? At the spritely age of 53 at his time of appointment, if he were appointed in 2013 he would be among the youngest envoys, whose average age was 64.2. He would also be among many fellow Europeans, who make up 33 per cent of multilateral envoys in this sampled year, although the highest percentage of envoys in 2013 were African.

Although more women envoys have been appointed in recent years, Count Bernadotte's gender matches 94.2 per cent of the envoys that year. His experience and status would put him in good company with these mediators, as high-profile envoys are commonly sought after. This essay analyzes some key trends in the profiles of the envoys of 2013, including status, gender, nationality, age and region.

## WHY ARE THERE MORE ENVOYS?

The overall number of active UN multilateral envoys, including those involved with border disputes, joint/double-hatted envoys, and heads of regional missions, more than **doubled from 2010 to 2013**, increasing from 6 to 16 envoys. A key reason behind this growth is enhanced emphasis on conflict prevention. The role of special envoys in mediation of disputes, and their efforts to defuse tensions before conflicts escalate, are in high demand. Experience has shown that as a conflict intensifies over time, it becomes increasingly difficult to resolve. This has fueled a renewed focus on conflict prevention among multilateral institutions involved in peace and security. In 2010, the then-UN Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Lynn Pascoe, **noted a re-emergence of preventive diplomacy and mediation**, describing these tools as cost-effective options for addressing crises.

Interest in prevention has continued to grow since Pascoe's time. Current USG Jeffrey Feltman has said **prevention should begin before conflict** is even visible, to keep unaddressed low-level tension from becoming more serious. Conflict prevention is central to DPA's current strategy. Feltman describes Good Offices of the Secretary-General and his Special Envoys as "**pivotal in preventing conflicts from erupting and in bringing wars to an end ... Our Special Envoys are perhaps the most visible manifestation of the Secretary-General's good offices mandate**". Although prevention efforts do not always halt the escalation of conflict, mediation and conflict resolution are crucial for achieving security and reconciliation in the long term.

Another reason the tool of envoy deployment has been used more frequently is that governments are more likely to comply with this approach. For governments, **cooperation with an envoy is a more palatable alternative to UN Chapter VII involvement** and inclusion on the Security Council's agenda.

The growing importance of rising powers in global decision-making, along with a shift in the U.S.'s approach to diplomacy, have also contributed to the **increased demand for mediation and conflict resolution**. President Barack Obama's call for a "new era of engagement" revealed a shift toward intensified multilateralism with a new focus on conflict prevention and negotiations.

Increased interest in mediation can be seen through the **strengthening of analytical capacities and technical expertise at the UN Department of Political Affairs**, such as mediation lessons learned and best practices. Other international and regional organizations are also responding to greater demand for conflict prevention through **the development of peace and mediation support mechanisms**. The Peace and Security Architecture of the African Union (APSA) contains a number of conflict prevention initiatives including Africa's Continental Early Warning System, which **became fully operational in 2009**, and the **Panel of the Wise**, first appointed in 2007, which supports the Peace and Security Council and Chairperson in conflict prevention.

Envoys and mediators from multilateral institutions are more commonly used to negotiate peace agreements.According to **research from Uppsala University** on 70 formal peace agreements signed from 2001-2011, 84 per cent were brokered by third party facilitators or mediators. Of those mediators, 51 per cent came from multilateral institutions or ad-hoc multilateral coalitions; 30 per cent were state governments; and 3 per cent were third party individuals, including a former head of state, and an NGO

representative. By contrast, from 1975-1985, only 24 formal peace agreements were recorded. Half of them were brokered by state governments and 37.5 per cent had no facilitator at all. Only three involved multilateral institutions.

The growing number of envoys means that there is a risk of crowding on the ground. Envoys are increasingly required to work together effectively to avoid duplication and maximize efficiency. The appointment of double-hatted envoys is a trending practice that multilateral organizations have utilized in order to streamline efforts.

Aside from the increase in numbers of envoys, what are the current trends in envoy profiles? In order to address this question, this essay utilizes confidential surveys and interviews conducted by CIC during spring 2014 with actors from nine multilateral institutions: the UN, AU, EU, OSCE, ECOWAS, OIF, IGAD, OAS, and the Commonwealth.

## STATUS AND THE AFRICA EXAMPLE

Many multilateral organizations are appointing high-profile envoys to address conflicts. These include heads of state (HoS), former heads of state, and former heads of multilateral institutions. The main reasons for selecting envoys with such prestige is that they tend to have great influence, access and leverage for obtaining results in peace agreements.

AU interlocutors noted a trend of appointing more high profile envoys such as HoS and former HoS. They noticed a distinct advantage to such high profile appointments in that these envoys' opinions tend to hold more weight and are taken seriously by all parties to a conflict. It can be easier for former or current HoS to interact with HoS and government officials that are involved in a conflict, which helps facilitate conflict resolution. According to an officer at the AU Peace and Security Department, issues can be so complex that they require the access and leverage that comes with high-ranking envoys. Thus, political suitability is a major consideration in envoy selection. In comparison to HoS, former HoS often have more leeway. Their political appointments as President have come to an end, but they still have the ability to leverage countries and actors for support.

## THE ROLE OF SPECIAL ENVOYS IN MEDIATION OF DISPUTES, AND THEIR EFFORTS TO DEFUSE TENSIONS BEFORE CONFLICTS ESCALATE, ARE IN HIGH DEMAND

AU officials frequently cited the example of former South African President, Thabo Mbeki, Chairperson of the High-Level Implementation Panel for Sudan and South Sudan (AUHIP). As a former president with experience negotiating a complicated transition in South Africa and expertise in dealing with rebel movements, Mbeki is highly respected and seen as influential by all conflict parties, factors which informed his appointment. Interlocutors describe Mbeki as having more leverage and using his personal capital in the peace process.

Alpha Oumar Konaré, Chair of the High-Level Panel for Egypt, is also described as having significant influence. As former head of the AU and former president of Mali, Konaré's stature was a significant factor in his appointment. Also serving on the panel are the former president of Botswana and former prime minister of Djibouti. Sitting heads of state are also frequently called upon by the

African Union to engage in mediation, such as the HLP in Cote d'Ivoire, which consisted of five African presidents, and the Ad hoc High-Level Committee on Libya, comprised of five African HoS and the AU Chairperson.

A third example mentioned by several AU interlocutors is Mohamed ibn Chambas, former Executive-Secretary of ECOWAS and Joint AU-UN Special Representative for Darfur. According to one interlocutor, Chambas was "easily accepted due to his stature and could alleviate fears and suspicions [of conflict parties]." He had experience dealing with Togo, Cote d'Ivoire and Liberia, which informed his appointment.

There also are several challenges to appointing high-profile envoys. According to one respondent, "sometimes we take for granted that high profile people will know certain things ... we need people who know all the daily nuts and bolts of the process, someone who knows all discussions and the complexity. Otherwise we can miss a lot." When high profile envoys are appointed, technical experts are crucial for backing their processes. A great number of AU officials emphasized that conflict resolution and prevention requires full-time expert-level staff to provide HoS and former HoS with input and analysis.

Some AU interlocutors argued that there are no great advantages to appointing current heads of state unless the conflict is very serious. "They are limited in what they can do and bound by time constraints in a process that shouldn't be bound by time," said one interlocutor.

The ability to mediate is not always taken into consideration, particularly for mediators of prominent stature. According to several interviewees, not all envoys have this ability, and it is not possible to sit down and train HoS and former HoS. In addition to ample expert level support staff, one interlocutor noted that development of a stand-by roster of skilled mediators could be beneficial for addressing this issue.

Multilateral institutions overwhelmingly noted that the status of the envoy chosen, whether a former head of state or foreign minister, depends on the context. However, there are differences in how envoys of prominent stature are received. In Madagascar in 2009, AU envoy Ablassé Ouedraogo was the former foreign minister of Burkina Faso. When SADC sent former Mozambican head of state, Joaquim Chissano, AU interlocutors noted that he was instantly shown a greater level of respect. Being a former head of state from the same region as the conflict also contributed to Chissano's strong influence.

Several other multilateral institutions mentioned the importance of appointing envoys with high-level profiles. One institution found that governments do not generally accept high-level envoys when they do not perceive a pending or existing crisis. These governments prefer to avoid the heightened media scrutiny that high-level envoys can attract to a conflict.

## GENDER

UNSC resolution 1325 in 2000 urged the Secretary-General to appoint more women as special representatives and envoys to pursue good offices missions. However, it was not until March 2013 that Mary Robinson, **the first woman to serve as chief UN mediator**, was appointed. A 2012 UN Women study noted that the numbers of women participating at the negotiation table in official roles remain remarkably low, making up only 2.4 per cent of chief mediators from 1992-2011. It noted no significant

improvement in women's participation in official negotiation positions since similar studies were conducted in 2010, but found that more consultations with women's civil society have occurred.

While the AU Chair is a woman, there are no female AU envoys dealing with specific conflict situations. At the time of writing, the only female special representative of the Chair was Bineta Diop, Special Representative for Women, Children and Armed Conflicts, but Diop was not included in this research as she is appointed to address a thematic issue rather than a specific conflict location. However, two out of the five members of the AU Panel of the Wise, which also holds mediation functions, are female. In 2008 **the AU appointed Graça Machel of Mozambique as one of three mediators** to address the Kenya elections.

Only three envoys, 5.8 per cent of the 52 included in this research, are female. Two represent the European Union, and one the UN. While this is some improvement since the 2012 UN Women study was conducted, the overall data still shows a notable lack of female representation in chief mediator roles, although it must be acknowledged that the criteria for inclusion of envoys in the UN Women study with its mediation focus may differ from CIC's.

Some studies observe certain character traits to be more prevalent in women, and make the case that those traits are desirable for mediators. However, arguing that women are natural peacemakers and have unique skills that make them inherently successful at mediation is a slippery slope. Character traits that are seen as beneficial to mediation can be perceived as either feminine or masculine and can be adopted by mediators of any gender.

Why, then, is women's participation in mediation an important issue? According to Bineta Diop, AU Special Representative for Women, Children and Armed Conflicts, **female mediators are more likely to prioritize gender issues**. Women's inclusion at the negotiation table sets the stage for the incorporation of women's issues into peace agreements and reconciliation processes. Studies show that countries with more gender equality are less likely to experience armed conflict. This could be incentive for taking steps to ensure that gender equality is improved through peace agreements, making the case for the **inclusion of women**.

**A 2013 International Peace Institute (IPI) issue brief on women in mediation** argues that women can bring different perspectives, mediating styles, and approaches to the negotiation table. The study also noted that a more "robust and resilient peace" is achieved as a result of the participation of women, and that inclusive peace processes are more likely to result in a durable peace. IPI and Diop also emphasize the role of men in contributing to both gender equality and peace efforts.

Furthermore, women mediators are likely to focus on inclusion in mediation processes. Exemplifying this, Mary Robinson has shown great commitment to the participation of women on high-level processes as well as gender equality. The IPI report argued that Robinson's approach to the inclusion of women in negotiations could be an effective model for other mediators to emulate.

While the idea that more women should be appointed to envoy positions is widely accepted and even incorporated into UN resolutions, progress in this area has been markedly slow. Furthermore, with the emphasis on experience and status in the selection of envoys, it can be more difficult for women to obtain the desirable characteristics of envoys, which contributes to their underrepresentation. Because of the dearth of women envoys, evidence indicating the success of women envoys in helping to facilitate lasting peace agreements has been limited. Perhaps with the growing numbers of women envoys, more studies can highlight the benefits of their leadership, and as a result the numbers of women envoys will grow more rapidly in the future.

## NATIONALITY, LANGUAGE AND RELIGION

HD's Mediation Ten Years On report noted that in addition to the substantial growth in the numbers of mediators over the last decade, the emerging diversity among mediators was also remarkable. One way that diversity reveals itself is in the regional and national origins of envoys. In this study, 24 envoys are from Africa. There are seventeen Europeans, five from the Americas, three from Asia and the Pacific, and one from the Middle East.

AU officials observed wide-ranging diversity among African Union envoys. When multilateral envoys are chosen, some of the most important factors that play into appointments include country of origin and regional representation, language abilities and religion. There are political reasons behind appointment decisions. In Sudan, for example, the country of origin of the envoy, Mohamed Ibn Chambas, and that country's relationship with Sudan, was a significant factor. AU officials also recognized that the Sudanese would feel more comfortable with a Muslim envoy, and that factored into the AU's proposal to appoint Chambas, which was accepted by the UN.

IGAD's negotiations in Sudan also involved nationality as an important role in envoy selection. The lead negotiator, Seyoum Mesfin, was a former Foreign Minister of Ethiopia, a country that was seen as neutral and accepted by different parties in the conflict.

Religion is an important factor for acceptance by conflict parties, and religious sensitivities can sometimes make a difference in regards to the outcome of negotiations. One interlocutor described a situation in which a high-level panel distributed an idea during an Eid holiday and it was not well received by conflict parties. In Somalia, Al-Shabab argued that mediation attempts were part of Christian crusades.

In general, AU representatives found that the AU could propose certain envoy profiles, which would generally be accepted by the UN or other multilateral and bilateral actors involved in a conflict. UN consultations with the AU to define the needed envoy profile for a given conflict are therefore becoming more common. However, one AU interlocutor observed that the UN argues at times for a non-African envoy, who would be perceived as more "tough" on pertinent issues.

## AGE

Preferences for appointing experienced and high-profile individuals have made the average age of envoys noticeably high. The average envoy in 2013 was 64.2, more than two years past the retirement age for most existing non-contracted UN staff and less than a year under the retirement age for new staff. Veteran Algerian mediator, Lakhdar Brahimi, was nearly 80 years old at the time of his appointment as the UN-Arab League Joint Special Representative for Syria. **Brahimi's strong reputation as a high-profile mediator with experience in the region informed his appointment**. Brahimi had wanted to retire in May 2013, but pressure to follow up the Geneva talks kept him from doing so until he finally stepped down a year later. In addition to frustrations related to the conflict, health issues and exhaustion were factors contributing to Brahimi's resignation.

Former Personal Representative of the UN Secretary-General on the Guyana-Venezuela border dispute, Oliver Jackman of Barbados, passed away at the age of 76 in 2007. Three years later, Norman Girvan was appointed as his replacement. Just four years after that, Girvan passed away at the age of 72, also while still in office. At the time of this publication, Girvan had not yet been replaced. While Jackman and Girvan were well known and respected for their experience and intellectual capacities, qualities

that tend to coincide with a diplomat's age, the Guyana-Venezuela border dispute is an example of how appointing older envoys can lead to gaps in mediation processes.

Other envoys have aged while in their positions, and because of many years of experience dealing with a specific conflict are seen as the best choice for continuing to mediate that conflict. Examples include 76-year-old Matthew Nimetz, who has served as Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Greece-FYROM talks since 1999, and 66-year-old Andrzej Kasprzyk, who has served as Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office on the Conflict Dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference since 1997.

A 2009 Secretary-General report highlights the necessity of developing the next generation of UN mediators. To achieve this goal, the UN must create opportunities for younger UN staff to develop mediation skills and experience. The Secretary-General advocates for partnerships with member states and regional organizations in support of mediation training programs.

## REGIONS AND DISTANCE

Regional organizations and states have increasingly played a role in mediation, and regional actors are often chosen to mediate in regional centers of conflict. The UN has emphasized the increasing importance of partnerships with regional multilateral institutions for addressing conflict. According to USG Feltman, "the crises we face are too complex for any one organization or Member State to address alone." Feltman has noted the importance of strong partnerships with regional actors such as the League of Arab States in Syria, and the African Union in Somalia and Mali. He also expressed the UN's efforts toward a strong partnership with ASEAN as the organization grows.

> **OVERALL DATA STILL SHOWS A NOTABLE LACK OF FEMALE REPRESENTATION IN CHIEF MEDIATOR ROLES, ALTHOUGH IT MUST BE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE CRITERIA FOR INCLUSION OF ENVOYS IN THE UN WOMEN STUDY WITH ITS MEDIATION FOCUS MAY DIFFER FROM CIC'S.**

The African Union emphasizes the idea of "African Solutions for African Problems." This does not mean Africa should solve its problems in isolation, but that it should take a lead role in addressing them, working in partnership with the international community. Out of the 30 envoys working in Africa, 22 are African.

Despite efforts to increase regional engagement in conflicts, envoys are still traveling great distances to reach the countries in which they work. Of the 52 envoys in this study, only seven are actually based where the conflict is taking place. Of the envoys traveling from afar to the countries in which they work, from the incomplete data available in 2014, the average distance was about 7,300 km or more than 4,500 miles. There are some benefits for envoys to have distance from a conflict, such as backstopping at headquarters locations, reducing safety and security concerns, and preserving the perception of impartiality. However, traveling long distances to reach a conflict presents several challenges including time considerations, financing and more effort needed to gain a deeper understanding of the situation on the ground.

## CONCLUSION

A 2009 UN Secretary-General report highlights that political and mediation skills, experience, knowledge, judgment, language abilities and personal characteristics suitable for cultural context are important for mediation. The report also emphasizes characteristics such as good listening and problem-solving skills, the ability to handle stress and criticism, and strong communication. It also noted that careful selection of mediators avoids The Seven Deadly Sins of Mediation; ignorance, arrogance, partiality, impotence, haste, inflexibility and false promises. However, few organizations surveyed for this publication mentioned the importance of specific skills and behaviors in the negotiating room when selecting envoys. Experience and status were much more commonly cited as attributes contributing to envoy appointments.

Some multilateral institutions such as the UN have developed standby units of mediators. These can offer a diverse selection of mediators with relevant skills that can be deployed on short notice to mediate conflicts as needed. The African Union is also developing the mediation component of standby rosters and working to further professionalize mediation at the AU. With multilateral institutions' growing emphasis on conflict prevention, efforts to select envoys of diverse backgrounds and with a wide range of skills will be even more crucial in the future.

*Ms. Gordon* *wrote this piece in her personal capacity and it does not necessarily reflect the views of the State Department.*

JAN ELIASSON (LEFT), THEN SPECIAL ENVOY OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR DARFUR, MEETS WITH THE FORMER TRADITIONAL LEADER OF THE FUR TRIBE IN NYALA, SUDAN IN JULY 2007. © UN MULTIMEDIA

# WHERE ENVOYS AREN'T

by Teresa Whitfield

**THE 34 CONFLICTS IN WHICH MULTILATERAL ENVOYS HAVE BEEN PRESENT MAY NEVERTHELESS SEEM A LOW RESULT GIVEN A WIDELY SHARED PERCEPTION OF INTENSE INTERNATIONAL ACTIVISM. THE NUMBER BECOMES LOWER STILL IF WE DISTINGUISH BETWEEN THOSE ENVOYS DIRECTLY MANDATED TO ENGAGE IN THE MEDIATION OR FACILITATION OF THE ARMED CONFLICT CONCERNED, AND THOSE WHOSE GOOD OFFICES OR OTHER ROLE HAS A MORE TANGENTIAL RELATIONSHIP TOWARDS IT.**

This series of essays was conceived to document and analyze the work of multilateral envoys, particularly their engagement in efforts to mediate or manage armed conflict. It necessarily focuses on the conflicts in which one or more multilateral envoys are present. This essay, in contrast, reviews the conflicts where envoys are not present, and attempts analysis of the reasons why this might be the case.

In their 2003 article "**Where Do the Peacekeepers Go?**", Michael Gilligan and Stephen John Stedman observed that the literature on the determinants of peacekeeping suffered from several methodological problems. The most prominent of these was "a tendency to select cases on the basis of the dependent variable and, by doing so, to restrict the sample to peacekeeping operations that the

UN has chosen to undertake". This led characteristics that these cases had in common to be used as the basis for understanding UN intervention, while ignoring the cases of civil wars or interstate aggression in which UN peacekeepers had not been present. The result was analysis that could not fully address the factors responsible for the decision to intervene.

When the 'intervention' comes in the more modest form of a multilateral envoy, it is no less necessary to broaden the frame of reference to include the cases where multilateral envoys are not present. The high number of these cases serves as a sobering reminder that there are many other means of addressing armed conflict than the appointment of a multilateral envoy. There are also cases, perhaps Syria most prominent among them, where the presence of a multilateral envoy has quite clearly not advanced progress towards a settlement, or may reflect a strategy little more sophisticated than a desire for the international community to be seen to be doing something, rather than nothing, to bring an intractable conflict towards its end. Meanwhile, there are numerous examples of political processes in which other international actors – e.g., individual states and/or non-governmental mediators – have been involved. In some cases, the confidentiality of their engagement complicates their documentation. In others, the quiet or gradual engagement of a multilateral actor (for example through a mid-level official not formally named as an envoy) lends a degree of discretion to multilateral involvement that can also be difficult to quantify.

The data nonetheless indicates a relatively high number of armed conflicts in which sensitivities to national sovereignty or the nature of the adversary – especially in this era of Al Qaeda and the Islamic State (IS) - complicate external involvement in mediation or facilitation. The governments concerned instead pursue the military defeat of their opponent(s) or another purely internal solution.

Modesty is called for to excuse both the "snapshot" methodological approach adopted within this essay, as well as the limitations of its closing conclusions. The "snapshot" provided by the accompanying table correlates the incidence of armed conflict as documented by the **Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP)** between 2011 and 2014 with the presence of one or more multilateral envoy. Obvious methodological drawbacks to this approach are that it does not attempt to factor in important issues such as the gravity of the conflict (measured in battle-related deaths), its duration, or the moment within the conflict at which an envoy is appointed. Nor does the analysis include issues addressed elsewhere in this series such as the multiplicity of envoys present in some conflicts, or questions related to the challenge of evaluating their impact.

The findings developed from the data nevertheless suggest that "where envoys aren't" can largely be attributed to three distinct, but sometimes overlapping factors:

**1)** Regional dynamics, and in particular sensitivities regarding national sovereignty that manifest themselves in attitudes toward the UN and other multilateral actors.

**2)** Push-back from strong states, again for reasons of national sovereignty.

**3)** The nature of the adversary and, especially in the post-9/11 climate, the legal and practical difficulties of engaging with those labeled as terrorists and other extremists. This is a problem that has become more acute given the increasing fragmentation of armed groups, the blurring of criminal and political agendas, and the rapid spread of Salafi jihadist groups which have so far demonstrated considerable success in sowing division and polarization within and between a wide range of international actors.

## ARMED CONFLICT 2011-2014

The UCDP defines an armed conflict as "a contested incompatibility that concerns government or territory or both where the use of armed force between two parties results in at least 25 battle-related deaths. Of these two parties, at least one has to be the government of a state". The table draws from the annual updates to the UCDP database Armed Conflicts, 1946-2014 included in the special data features published in the Journal of Peace Research, in each of the years 2011 (37 armed conflicts), 2012 (32 armed conflicts), 2013 (33 armed conflicts, subsequently revised to 34), and 2014 (40 armed conflicts). The figure of 40 armed conflicts made 2014 the year with the highest number of conflicts seen since 1999; it was also the year with the highest-number of battle–related deaths in the post-Cold War period.

> **THE COMPLEX ENVIRONMENT, IN WHICH MANY CONFLICTS ARE CHARACTERIZED BY THE FRAGMENTATION OF ARMED ACTORS AS WELL AS THE GROWING PRESENCE OF JIHADI GROUPS, HAS BROUGHT WITH IT UNPRECEDENTED CHALLENGES TO THE TOOLS OF CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND RESPONSE DEVELOPED SINCE THE END OF THE COLD WAR.**

Changes in the panorama of armed conflict during this four-year period are attributable both to processes set in motion by the upheaval in the Arab world that began in 2011 and to the deterioration of relations between Russia and the West. This has been at its most acute in Ukraine, but also manifests as hindrance to building international consensus on other crises, most notably including Syria. Revolutions and counterrevolutions in the Arab world contributed to the emergence of armed conflicts in Libya and in Syria, the latter by 2012 seeing exceptionally high levels of casualties for the post-Cold War period, as well as massive levels of displacement and other forms of humanitarian duress. Arab unrest also precipitated the deterioration of the situation in Iraq, markedly including the rise of the Islamic State, as well as the eruption of conflict in Mali and the exacerbation of violence and insecurity across much of North Africa and the Sahel. Elsewhere in Africa conflict surged in the Central African Republic, Nigeria and Somalia; South Sudan in late 2013 deteriorated into civil war.

This complex environment, in which many conflicts are characterized by the fragmentation of armed actors as well as the growing presence of jihadi groups, has brought with it unprecedented challenges to the tools of conflict management and response developed since the end of the Cold War. In many situations they have been found to be wanting.

The period was nonetheless one of active peacemaking. In Asia a major peace agreement was reached in the Philippines between the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) in Mindanao, with a framework agreement signed in October 2012 and the final agreement in early 2014. However, the activity of other armed groups in the Southern Philippines contributed to the perpetuation of conflict in Mindanao in 2013, as well as the outbreak of a brief conflict in Sabah in Malaysia. Substantial progress has also been made in addressing Myanmar's long-standing ethnic conflicts, alongside impressive steps away from authoritarian rule. The complexity of the ethnic conflicts in Myanmar contributed to the resurgence of fighting between the government of

Myanmar and the Karen, Polaung and Shan in 2013, and fighting continued with Kachin, Kokang and Palaung in 2014. But steady advances have been made towards a national ceasefire agreement that in October 2015 was signed by eight out of fifteen officially recognized armed groups.

Over the four years, given annual fluctuations reflecting the decline or settlement of some conflicts and the emergence of new ones, UCDP recorded a total of 59 armed conflicts. Of these, twelve conflicts (Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Nigeria, Pakistan, Somalia, Syria, South Sudan, Sudan, Ukraine-Donetsk, Ukraine-Novorossiya, and Yemen) in at least one year surpassed the threshold of 1,000 battle-related deaths, leading UCDP to classify them as wars. Meanwhile there were eighteen "internationalized intrastate armed conflicts", which are defined by UCDP as armed conflicts that occur "between the government of a state and internal opposition groups, with intervention from other states in the form of troops". These conflicts were in Azerbaijan (Nagorno-Karabakh), Afghanistan, Algeria, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Israel-Palestine, Mali (Ansar Dine/Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa [MUJAO]), Mauritania, Nigeria, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan, Ukraine (Donetsk), Ukraine (Lugansk), Ukraine (Novorossiya), Uganda, the United States (with Al Qaeda), and Yemen.

## WHERE ENVOYS ARE …

The table records the presence of multilateral envoys in more than half (34) of these 59 conflicts. With one exception (Pakistan), these conflicts include all twelve wars, and fifteen of the eighteen internationalized conflicts (the exceptions being Algeria, Mauritania, and the U.S.). This strongly suggests that both the gravity of a conflict and its degree of internationalization favor the appointment of multilateral envoys.

The 34 conflicts in which multilateral envoys have been present may nevertheless seem a low result given a widely shared perception of intense international activism. The number becomes lower still if we distinguish between those envoys directly mandated to engage in the mediation or facilitation of the armed conflict concerned, and those whose good offices or other role has a more tangential relationship towards it. In seventeen cases the envoys fall into the latter category, reducing the number of situations in which multilateral envoys were directly mandated to mediate or facilitate an end to armed conflict to only 17 out of 59, or little more than a quarter.

The conflicts in which an envoy, or more than one envoy was directly engaged include:

- Azerbaijan (Nagorno-Karabakh)
- Ukraine (Donetsk)
- Ukraine (Lugansk)
- Ukraine (Novorossiya)
- Israel-Palestine
- Syria
- Yemen
- Cambodia-Thailand
- Central African Republic
- Ivory Coast

- Libya (Ghadafi)

- Libya (Zintan brigades)

- Mali (Azawad)

- South Sudan (internal conflict)

- South Sudan-Sudan (Abyei)

- South Sudan-Sudan border

- Sudan-Darfur/Sudanese Revolutionary Front.

It is striking that, of these seventeen conflicts, three were in Ukraine, nine were on the African continent, and four within or between South Sudan and Sudan, where several conflicts were addressed under the broad mandate of the Chairperson of the African Union's High Level Implementation Panel for Sudan and South Sudan. Only one, the very particular case of the Cambodian-Thailand conflict over the temple of Preah Vihear and their common border, was in Asia. This long-standing conflict was, exceptionally, resolved through talks facilitated by an envoy of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

The seventeen conflicts in which envoys have been present but played or continue to play more tangential roles generally embrace situations in which the UN and other international actors are heavily engaged, but do not have a direct mandate to act as mediator or facilitator in the conflict. This is typically because there is no peace process or engagement with the concerned armed group(s) taking place – with the Islamic State in Iraq, for example, or AQIM in Mali. Even in Yemen, where the UN has long played a central role, UN Special Adviser on Yemen worked closely with the Gulf Cooperation Council and the EU to support the Yemeni national dialogue but did not engage directly in the conflict between Yemen and Al Qaeda on the Arabian Peninsula.  (The role would have been coded as "more tangential" to the armed conflict were it not for the escalating violence in the conflict with the Houthis, with whom the UN was engaged, seen in 2014.)

Similarly, the UN and other envoys (the former, it should be recalled, work within the framework of a broad good offices mandate that (**may be either implicit or explicit in the role of a representative or envoy of the UN Secretary-General**) played significant supporting roles but were not directly mandated to facilitate or mediate talks between:

Afghanistan and the Taliban (even as engagement with the Taliban was pursued by a variety of official and unofficial actors, including the UN)

Somalia and Al Shabaab (although successive UN SRSGs explored the possibility of supporting dialogue)

the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the M23 (March 23 Movement, whose talks were facilitated by Uganda)

Mali and Ansar Dine and the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO)

Rwanda and the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), with whom engagement would in June 2014 be attempted by the Community of Sant' Egidio, to the outrage of Rwanda)

Nigeria – where a high level UN envoy became engaged only in 2014, with his efforts largely concentrated on preparations for elections in early 2015 – and Boko Haram

The government of Myanmar and ethnic armed groups (although a UN Special Adviser on Myanmar offered support to the peace process overall )Meanwhile, in December 2011, three years after the collapse of the Juba peace talks between Uganda and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), the **AU appointed a Special Envoy on the LRA-** but with a mandate to "provide overall political and strategic coordination of the operation against the LRA", rather than to attempt a new political process.

## … AND AREN'T

Beyond the 34 conflicts in which envoys have been directly engaged or present, there are 25 cases in which no multilateral envoy has been involved. In some conflicts, as expected, this is because – as in the previous category – there is no public political process or engagement underway. In others, it is because a peace process has taken shape, but it has not been deemed appropriate or helpful to engage multilateral envoys within it. The regional distribution is of note: twelve (out of total of nineteen Asian conflicts) of the 25 no-envoy conflicts are in Asia; a further six (out of a total of 24 African conflicts) are in Africa;, three (out of eight) are in the Middle East; two (out of two) are in the Americas;, and two (out of six) are in Europe.

### THE AFRICAN UNION AND AFRICAN SUB-REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, ON THE OTHER HAND, HAVE DEVELOPED NORMS AND PRACTICES THAT REFLECT A HIGH TOLERANCE FOR INTERVENTION AND APPOINT ENVOYS ON A REGULAR BASIS.

In a number of cases the state concerned sought a military solution against an armed group it held to be and/or formally designated a terrorist organization. Examples include the conflict between Russia and the Caucasus Emirates in Chechnya; that between Ethiopia and the Oromo Liberation Front; that between Algeria and Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and MUJAO; and that between the U.S. and Al Qaeda. A number of these conflicts emerged or escalated during the four-year period. The Islamic State in Iraq (ISI) mutated into the Islamic State in Iraq and Greater Syria (ISIS) and launched a dramatic offensive against the government of Iraq in mid-2014. Levels of violence in the conflict between Nigeria and Boko Haram, which first erupted in 2009 – and where, as noted above, a multilateral envoy was not directly involved - also accelerated from to over 1,600 battle-related deaths in 2013, and over 4,600 in 2014.

India and Pakistan, meanwhile, pursued distinct but predominantly militaristic policies against the six conflicts within the two countries. The four in India included its decades-old conflict in Kashmir; its conflict with the Communist Party of India (Maoist) in states in central India; and territorial conflicts with two rebel groups, the Goro National Liberation Army, formed in 2010, and the National Democratic Front of Bodoland, which had low but fluctuating levels of violence. Pakistan continued its territorial conflict in Baluchistan and its conflict with different branches of the Pakistani Taliban and other armed groups. The threshold of violence in the latter remained at a level of war in all four years under review (talks were attempted in early 2014 before a return to a military offensive). Concerns about sovereignty – especially on the part of India – have also long precluded the engagement of a multilateral envoy in the inter-state conflict between the two countries, which was recognized as active by UCDP in 2014, albeit only at a low level.

The conflicts in Iran, Tajikistan and Mauritania did not register as such in the UCDP database after 2011. Iran appeared to have subdued the Kurdish rebel group Party for a Free Life in Kurdistan after a large offensive in 2011. In Tajikistan a low intensity conflict against the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan dwindled as the government pursued its leaders in the courts. And in Mauritania there was little fighting with AQIM after 2011 in part, **UCDP surmised**, because AQIM was active elsewhere, notably in Northern Mali.

The confidential nature of some peace processes, especially in their early stages, complicates their documentation, but in at least six of the conflicts in which no multilateral envoy was present there has either been a public peace process without the involvement of an envoy, or indication that a more confidential process has been underway. The latter is the case in the long-running conflict between Turkey and the Kurdistan Workers' Party where in early 2013 Prime Minister Recip Erdogan **confirmed the existence of talks with Abdullah Ocalan**, the imprisoned Kurdish leader.

Standing in contrast to the Turkish case is the complex and very public international involvement in the peace process in Mindanao, in the Southern Philippines, where multilateral organizations have been involved but kept at arms' length. The Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) facilitated talks with the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) that led to an agreement in 1996 from which later agreements have drawn. The Philippine government sought the involvement of ASEAN in the MILF process, but encountered resistance from Malaysia – which became the facilitator of the talks – over the involvement of Indonesia. The EU, meanwhile, was keen to develop a role for itself, but remained outside an International Contact Group (ICG) formed in 2009 with a composition that mixed states (Japan, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and the United Kingdom) with international NGOs (The Asia Foundation, the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD Centre), Conciliation Resources and Muhammadiyah). Both the EU and OIC were mentioned in the **terms of reference of the ICG**, and implicit within its composition was an understanding that the EU would be kept informed and play a major role in peace process support. A peace process with the Communist Party of the Philippines, meanwhile, has languished, but continues with the facilitation of Norway.

Norway is also one of two facilitators – the other being Cuba – in a very active peace process, public since 2012, that seeks to bring to an end the armed conflict between the government of Colombia and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia. The talks are held in Havana, Cuba. Other international actors involved include Chile and Venezuela as 'accompanying' states, and in 2015 delegates of the UN Secretary-General and the president pro-tempore (Uruguay) of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) were appointed to support talks on a ceasefire and disarmament.

Regional states also have leading roles in a slow developing peace processes addressing the conflict between Ethiopia and the Ogaden National Liberation Front, facilitated by Kenya, and in Southern Thailand. Early in 2013 Malaysia assumed facilitation of the process between Thailand and the Pattani insurgency, which had long been conducted confidentially by the HD Centre. The HD Centre and the Community of Sant'Egidio, work in a coordinated fashion to facilitate different tracks of the peace process between the government of Senegal and separatist movements in the Casamance.Unofficial actors also played a successful role in support of the peace process between the government of Mozambique and RENAMO, the Mozambican National Resistance, that concluded in an agreement to end the low-level armed conflict that had developed in advance of the elections held in 2014.

## FINDINGS

There are exceptional cases in which the gravity of a conflict or crisis such as a coup precipitates the appointment of an envoy or envoys without consent. However, in most circumstances, the factors determining the presence of a multilateral envoy reflect issues of both supply and demand. A multilateral entity has to be ready to deploy the envoy, and the parties concerned – with the government invariably the primary interlocutor for an envoy sent in representation of other states - have to be ready to receive and engage with him or her.

The data suggests three broad findings to explain the interplay of supply and demand that determines the appointment of multilateral envoys:

## FINDING 1: SENSITIVITIES TOWARD NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY EVIDENT WITHIN REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND IN ATTITUDES TOWARD THE UN AND OTHER MULTILATERAL ACTORS CONTRIBUTE TO DETERMINING THE PRESENCE OR ABSENCE OF ENVOYS.

There is considerable regional variance in the cases in which no envoy is present. Most striking is a comparison between Africa and Asia, the two regions with the highest number of armed conflicts in the 2011-2014 period. Envoys were not present in only seven out of the 24 armed conflicts in Africa, but 12 out of 19 conflicts in Asia. Moreover, even this figure skews low given that five out of the seven Asian conflicts in which an envoy is indicated as present were in Myanmar, where the UN Special Adviser had limited direct involvement in the peace processes with ethnic groups. (An envoy of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation was in 2014 appointed to address the issue of the Rohingya.) A fourth was the anomalous case - in Asian terms - of Afghanistan.

The data reflects what is amply documented elsewhere in this series: multilateral organizations vary greatly in the mandates and sensibilities with which they approach conflict intervention due primarily to the sensitivities of member states over their sovereignty. The UN has a universal mandate, but finds differing degrees of receptivity to its involvement in different regions, and little room for a political role in Asia. The European Union, uniquely for a regional organization, has no internal mandate and a global presence, but rarely assumes the lead in a mediating effort; in Ukraine, it is unsurprising that it is the OSCE, whose membership includes Russia and Ukraine, as well as EU member states, that has assumed the prime responsibility for peacemaking.

The African Union and African sub-regional organizations, on the other hand, have developed norms and practices that reflect a high tolerance for intervention and appoint envoys on a regular basis. As the reach and capacity of African regional organizations has grown, so the tendency for their envoys to engage - either with the support of the UN or independently of it - has also developed. (The relatively small role, in political terms, played by the UN in efforts to resolve the conflict in South Sudan is a good example of this).

In Asia, meanwhile, sensitivity to intervention is high and regional organizations do not have robust mandates for peace and security. There is insufficient consensus within ASEAN's member states, for example, to play the good offices role outlined in its Charter, where the first or the organization's purposes is defined as being: "To maintain and enhance peace, security and stability and further strengthen peace-oriented values in the region". A more generalized aversion to the formalization of diplomatic roles contributes to a dearth of envoys. In several cases it has facilitated the involvement of non-governmental organizations in mediation and mediation support.

## FINDING 2: PUSH-BACK FROM STRONG STATES CAN PREEMPT THE APPOINTMENT OF ENVOYS.

A high number of the conflicts in which no multilateral envoy is present take place in strong states that actively resist external involvement, and especially that of a multilateral organization. Russia, India and Pakistan have clearly rejected the engagement of multilateral actors in their internal conflicts (seven in the four-year period under review). Nigeria similarly long resisted the involvement of either the UN or the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the regional organization in which it is the dominant power, in its conflict with Boko Haram. This was even as it was – in contrast to Russia, India, Pakistan or indeed China - relatively open to the involvement of NGOs (for example in efforts to address conflicts in Jos state). In 2014, in the exceptional circumstances of increased international attention after Boko Haram kidnapped over 200 schoolgirls, **Nigeria did accept the engagement of a high level UN envoy**. However, his efforts were focused on preparations for the general elections held in early 2015. During 2015 Nigeria assumed the lead of an ad hoc coalition of West African counterterrorism troops – the Multinational Joint Task Force – to fight Boko Haram in Nigeria, Niger, Chad and Cameroon.

Senegal has also resisted the involvement of ECOWAS in the Casamance. Ethiopia, meanwhile, preferred the facilitation of Kenya in its conflict over the Ogaden to the involvement of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, an eight-country sub-regional organization whose peacemaking capacities have long been complicated by the regional rivalries amongst its membership (prominently on display in the peace process it leads in South Sudan).

The power of strong states to resist outside intervention within their borders or in their "near abroad" has also been evident in a number of long-standing conflicts with levels of violence below the UCDP threshold of armed conflict between 2011-2014. There have, for example, been no multilateral envoys in Tibet, or to address China's conflict with the Uighurs. The UN, meanwhile, was discouraged by Russia from exercising too assertive a role in Ukraine, and by South Africa, as well as Zimbabwe itself, from involvement in the latter. In the European context, Spain's sensitivity to its sovereignty ensured that there was no EU or other formal international role in the Basque conflict – in contrast to Northern Ireland where the British government welcomed the engagement of a US mediator. But this did not impede a rather an unusual mix of informal international involvement in a peace process that contributed to the **decision by the separatist group ETA to end its violence in October 2011**.

## FINDING 3: THE NATURE OF THE ADVERSARY, ESPECIALLY IN THE POST-9/11 CLIMATE, BRINGS LEGAL AND PRACTICAL DIFFICULTIES TO ENGAGEMENT AND RESTRICTS THE APPOINTMENT OF ENVOYS.

An overlapping number of conflicts in which no envoy is present are those in which a state is in conflict with an extremist group, understood or classified by the state itself and the international community as a terrorist organization. (It is important to note that **states routinely consider internal insurgencies as terrorist organizations**, regardless of the existence of underlying grievances or legitimacy among some sectors of the population.) As we have seen, there were no multilateral envoys mediating or facilitating talks with extremists with varying links to Al Qaeda in Russia, Iraq, Syria, Pakistan, Algeria, Mali, Mauritania, Nigeria, Somalia or indeed the Philippines (Abu Sayaf). And after the collapse of the peace process with LRA in Uganda in 2008, international engagement has been focused on support to military efforts to secure its defeat.

Engagement with extremists - especially by formal mediators – brings with it particular constraints of both supply and demand. In many cases international opinion has coalesced behind a view that only a military solution that brings the defeat of the terrorist opponent is acceptable. Legal impediments to engagement are also significant obstacles to many multilateral actors. These are most evident in restrictions on "material support" to foreign terrorist organizations contained within US legislation, but also reflected in national counter-terrorist legislation and UN sanctions regimes. UN officials enjoy diplomatic immunity from national legislations, but are nonetheless subject to political pressures from member states that can complicate their engagement. NGOs may frequently have greater capacity for early contacts and the opening of discreet channels for communication. All potential mediators, meanwhile, are challenged by situations in which an armed group has no wish to talk and will violently prevent engagement, or is prepared to engage but only on terms that restrict what there might be to talk about – for example, absolutist demands for an Islamic Caliphate.

## CONCLUSION

These findings have different implications for the conflict resolution field. The presence of a multilateral envoy, or not, is a result of a variety of different contextual factors. In itself it may be value-neutral, even for the wider engagement of the international community, as innovative international support provided to the peace processes in the Philippines and Colombia demonstrates. And the increasing sophistication of mediation support offers new possibilities for the helpful involvement of multilateral actors such as the UN or EU even in situations when their envoys may not have a mandated role.

Meanwhile, there would appear to be a rising number of contexts "where envoys aren't", in which either individual states or experienced non-governmental actors may be more acceptable than a multilateral envoy. Both may be able to engage with more discretion than a representative of a multilateral actor.  Non-governmental actors in particular are less restricted by political and diplomatic constraints than a representative of a multilateral actor, or even a state. They may therefore be able to make and sustain contacts with an armed group with a degree of acceptability that might elude a more formal actor.

Opposition from a strong state represents perhaps the greatest obstacle to the engagement of a multilateral actor, state, or indeed an NGO. But as adroit diplomacy by the UN has demonstrated in some cases, there may be circumstances in which what appeared to be unwavering hostility to its engagement can gradually be shifted towards acceptance that it might play a helpful role. The case of Nepal is illustrative. In that instance the UN was able to overcome initial Indian objections to a formal envoy through the quiet deployment of a skilled mid-level official. Over time, his efforts helped pave the way for a substantial UN role in the support of the peace process.  In Colombia progress towards what seems a likely UN role in the monitoring of the ceasefire has followed a different route. Respect and support for negotiations led by national actors and an ad hoc number of individual states has paved the way for the UN's technical know-how, and capacity to deploy a mission into what will surely be a complex post-conflict environment.

Regardless of the presence or absence of a multilateral envoy, in a world of increased armed conflict, but also diffusion of power, intense international activity, but also polarization, the fragmentation of armed actors, as well as the presence of increasingly powerful transnational networks and capacities, creative diplomacy is required. This should involve careful attention as to which entity may be best placed to provide it in order to avoid regional and bureaucratic rivalries that can further complicate an inevitably already complicated situation, rather than help nudge all involved forwards to a solution.

*Teresa Whitfield is the Senior Adviser to the President at the International Crisis Group; an earlier draft of this article was completed when she was Senior Adviser to the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue.* | ***Twitter: @WhitfieldTeresa***

## SEE ARMED CONFLICTS AND MULTILATERAL ENVOYS TABLE ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE

## ARMED CONFLICTS AND MULTILATERAL ENVOYS

| Armed Conflicts[1] | Over govt. or territory | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | Inter-national-ized conflict2 | Multilateral Envoy(s) present3 | No Multilateral Envoy |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Europe  (6) | | | | | | | | |
| Azerbaijan-Nagorno-Kara-bakh | T | | x | | x | X | X | |
| Russia-Caucasus Emirates | T | x | x | x | x | | | X |
| Ukraine (Donetsk) | T | | | | X | X | X | |
| Ukraine (Lugansk) | T | | | | x | X | X | |
| Ukraine (Maidan) | G | | | | x | | | X |
| Ukraine (Novorossiya) | T | | | | X | X | X | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| Middle East  (8) | | | | | | | | |
| Egypt – Islamic State (IS)-Sinai | G | | | | x | | | X |
| Iran—PJAK (Kurds) | T | x | | | | | | X |
| Iraq-IS | G | x | x | X | X | X | (x) | |
| Israel-Palestine (Hamas, PU, PIJ) | T | x | x | | X | X | X | |
| Lebanon- IS | G | | | | x | | (x) | |
| Syria-FSA, JaN | G | x | X | X | X | | X | |
| Turkey-PKK | T | x | x | x | | | | X |
| Yemen-AQAP, Houthis | G | X | X | x | X | X | X | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| Asia (19) | | | | | | | | |
| Afghanistan -Taleban | G | X | X | X | X | X | (x) | |
| Cambodia - Thailand | T | x | | | | | X | |
| India- Bodoland | T | | | x | x | | | X |
| India – Garoland | T | | x | | x | | | X |
| India - Kashmir | T | x | x | x | x | | | X |
| India – CPI-Maoist | G | x | x | x | x | | | X |
| India- Pakistan | T | | | | x | | | X |
| Malaysia - Sabah | T | | | x | | | | X |
| Myanmar - Kachin | T | x | x | x | x | | (x) | |
| Myanmar - Karen | T | x | | x | | | (x) | |
| Myanmar - Kokang | T | | | | x | | (x) | |
| Myanmar  - Palaung | T | | | x[4] | x | | (x) | |
| Myanmar- Shan | T | x | | x | | | (x) | |
| Pakistan – Baluch. | T | x | x | x | x | | | X |
| Pakistan – TTP etc. | G | X | X | X | X | | | X |
| Philippines – Mindanao | T | x | x | x | x | | | X |
| Philippines – CPP | G | x | x | x | x | | | X |
| Tajikistan – IMU | G | x | | | | | | X |
| Thailand - Patani | T | x | x | x | x | | | X |
| | | | | | | | | |
| Africa (24) | | | | | | | | |
| Algeria – AQIM/MUJAO | G | x | x | x | x | X | | X |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CAR - Seleka | G | x | x | x | | X | X | |
| DR Congo - Katanga | T | | | x | x | | (x) | |
| DRC – M23, APCLS, PARC-FAAL | G | | x | X | x | X | (x) | |
| Ethiopia – Ogaden | T | x | x | x | x | | | X |
| Ethiopia – Oromiya | T | x | x | x | | | | X |
| Ivory Coast – post elections | G | x | | | | | X | |
| Libya – Ghadaffi-NTC | G | X | | | | | X | |
| Libya- Zintan Brigades | G | | | x | | | X | |
| Mali - Azawad | T | | x | | x | X | X | |
| Mali – Ansar Dine, MUJAO | G | | x | x | | | (x) | |
| Mali- al-Murabitun, AQIM | G | | | | x | | (x) | |
| Mauritania - AQIM | G | x | | | | X | | X |
| Mozambique- Renamo | G | | x | | | | | X |
| Nigeria – Boko Haram | G | x | x | X | X | | (x) | |
| Rwanda - FDLR | G | x | x | | | X | (x) | |
| Senegal – MFDC, Casamance | T | x | | | | | | X |
| Somalia – Al Shabaab | G | X | X | x | X | X | (x) | |
| S. Sudan – SSDM, SSLM | G | x | x | X | | X | (x) | |
| S. Sudan – SPLM/A in Opposition | G | | | X | X | | X | |
| S. Sudan – Sudan (Abyei) | T | x | | | | | X | |
| S. Sudan – Sudan (border) | T | | x | | | | X | |
| Sudan – Darfur/SRF | G | X | X | x | x | | X | |
| Uganda – LRA, ADF | G | x | | x | x | X | (x) | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| Americas (2) | | | | | | | | |
| Colombia – FARC | G | x | x | x | x | | | X |
| USA – Al Qaeda | G | | x | x | x | X | | X |
| Total | 59 | 37 | 32 | 34 | 40 | 18 | 34 (17) | 25 |

## ENDNOTES

[1] Lists of armed conflicts from the Uppsala Conflict Data Program, Armed Conflicts, 1946-2014 dataset drawn from annual data feature in the July issue of the Journal of Peace Research.  x denotes armed conflict (generating a minimum of 25 battle-related deaths a year); X denotes conflict classified by UCDP as war (generating more than 1,000 battle related deaths in a year).

[2] Conflicts that saw international involvement with troop support from an external state to one or both warring parties, within this three-year period.

[3] Multilateral envoy(s) engaged within this three-year period; in situations in which an envoy or envoys are engaged but without a mandate to address this specific conflict through mediation, facilitation or conflict resolution this is indicated by (x).

[4] Themnér and Wallensteen (2014) reported 33 conflicts as active in 2013, but Petersson and Wallensteen (2015) subsequently revised the 2014 data to include the Myanmar-Palaung conflict as active in 2013.

IN 2001 DARFURIS AWAIT THE ARRIVAL OF IBRAHIM GAMARI, JOINT SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE FOR THE AFRICAN UNION-UNITED NATIONS HYBRID OPERATION IN DARFUR (UNAMID). MR. GAMBARI AND HIS TEAM VISITED MUKJAR FOLLOWING THE FOURTH SPECIAL ENVOYS RETREAT EL GENEINA, WEST DARFUR. ©UN PHOTO/OLIVIER CHASSOT

# MULTILATERAL ENVOYS: CHALLENGES TO ASSESSING SUCCESS

by the Center on International Cooperation

**CAUSAL LINKS BETWEEN MEDIATION EFFORTS AND ULTIMATE OUTCOMES, ESPECIALLY THOSE CONCERNING PEACE OR JUSTICE, ARE SELDOM AS DIRECT AND TRANSPARENT AS ASSESSMENT SPONSORS WOULD HOPE FOR.**

Envoys dispatched to make peace deploy with a bag full of assumptions. Those who send them believe the multilateral framework gives their emissary the moral legitimacy to intervene. They think that pooling efforts under one collective engagement is more cost effective. They claim multilateral conflict prevention saves lives. But how can these and other assumptions about the effectiveness of multilateral envoys be tested?

As the UN and the AU have worked to improve their work in the field of mediation, they have concurrently strengthened their ability to measure and account for the results of their interventions. This builds on a growing body of evaluative work undertaken by the mediation community to identify success factors and articulate norms and good practices for an increasingly crowded field.

Any analysis of these efforts should begin with a review of the common obstacles to assessing mediation initiatives, examining the main success factors and the extent to which a multilateral approach renders these challenges more or less acute. In the low-control, multi-causal world of multilateral special envoy diplomacy, an examination of assessment issues reveals a range of implications and choices for how multilateral organizations go about deploying special envoys. Ultimately, such evaluations cannot escape the tensions inherent to multilateralism. If nothing else, they bring these tensions into even greater focus, while offering at the same time opportunities for sharpening the narrative for a multilateral approach to conflict prevention.

## ASSESSING SUCCESS OR FAILURE

The difficulties in assessing, as objectively as possible, the success or failure of mediation and conflict prevention diplomacy have been well documented. Several of these challenges, such as the difficulty in determining a relevant baseline for many indicators or the lack of reliable counterfactuals, are inherent to the nature of the endeavor, regardless of the type of mediation or profiles involved.

Likewise, assessments of mediation efforts, whether undertaken from bilateral or multilateral entities, are also heavily influenced by perceptions and political agendas that are often divorced from facts and objective analysis. Maintaining confidentiality during and after various proceedings is an imperative of most if not all mediation processes, but it does affect post-assessment efforts.

**AS THE UN AND THE AU HAVE WORKED TO IMPROVE THEIR WORK IN THE FIELD OF MEDIATION, THEY HAVE CONCURRENTLY STRENGTHENED THEIR ABILITY TO MEASURE AND ACCOUNT FOR THE RESULTS OF THEIR INTERVENTIONS.**

The difficulty in establishing a foolproof counterfactual and the lack of access to all that was said and done combine, in turn, to make attribution notoriously resistant to objective metrics. Causal links between mediation efforts and ultimate outcomes, especially those concerning peace or justice, are seldom as direct and transparent as assessment sponsors would hope for. Lacking robust, unfalsifiable foundations, these links are often disputed on political and technical grounds.

Finally, the field of mediation is particularly vulnerable to the selection effect, whereby the most intractable conflicts receive the most attention, including when it comes to assessment. As a result, the sense that mediation is difficult, while axiomatic, is often amplified by a pundit focus on those truly complex cases.

Other assessment challenges, while also applicable to bilateral mediation, become particularly acute in the case of multilateral deployments. The aforementioned selection effect is a predominant feature of multilateral mediation assessments, precisely because the most difficult conflicts tend to be handed to multilateral organizations. Furthermore, building consensus on the objective of the mediation is even more difficult when the mandates and support for the mediation need to be negotiated among many competing member state agendas and perspectives. Often, agreement among member states to "get someone out there" can only be achieved on the basis of vague objectives, which renders assessments of results more complicated. Even within smaller multilateral organizations, shared definitions of success and goals prove to be problematic.

Multilateral mediation also faces more difficulty in delineating and obtaining consensus on a clear endpoint. For multilateral organizations, engagement never really ends, especially where the UN or regional organizations are intervening within their regions. When a mediator is called back, diplomacy continues in some form. Even when a formal mediation process is successfully closed, an assessment must consider the aftermath, which inevitably raises the question: when is it safe to declare mission accomplished? This conundrum affects all mediation initiatives, and is compounded by all of the aforementioned challenges, but it affects multilateral efforts with distinct intensity.

The mediation community has undertaken significant efforts to overcome these challenges. In recent years, it has shaped a growing consensus on the need to combine robust, data driven approaches with contextual analysis and, where relevant, imports from other disciplines such as psychology, rational choice and game theory.

Generally, reporting on mediation efforts has gained increased credibility, narrowing the understanding gaps among relevant actors including member states that oversee, authorize and fund multilateral efforts. However, beyond the increased complexity and costs of properly assessing mediation, this renewed focus on assessment brings into relief two broader, strategic questions.

The first question relates to the very real possibility of assessments "doing harm." From technical challenges to political pressures, there are various reasons for which an assessment can be discarded, misinterpreted or manipulated, in increasing order of harm. The repercussions are also varied. They can take the form of a damaged reputation for individuals, including the mediator, an institution or, more generally, for the practice of mediation. In the case of mediation failure or even stalemate, disagreements over an assessment and how to properly interpret its findings can also potentially undermine member state decision-making for corrective measures, with many avoiding self-examination as to if and how they may have contributed to such failure.

The question of what to do with an assessment, even in the rare instances where member states agree on its findings, underlies a second major consideration. It is fairly clear that a narrowly-defined drive for evaluative perfection is ill-suited to mediation. This truism should not be construed by mediation practitioners and institutions as a reason to dismiss assessments. But the incongruity of expecting a scientific formula means that member states and decision makers must debate mediation results in an effort to reduce the scope for disagreements.

The aim should be to maximize the value and relevance of the assessment findings in subsequent decision making. In the context of political negotiations, one may even argue that the inherent difficulty in drawing definitive conclusions is in itself valuable, as it forces debate and further engagement.

These debates are only productive if they are based on a reasonable set of interpretations. The value of assessments is to narrow, but not always to eliminate, the range of potential interpretations. Hence, rather than strive Sisyphus-like for technically perfect and indisputable findings, multilateral organizations should seek to develop and implement clear methodologies. Harmonizing the factors and indicators used to reach credible conclusions will also narrow the scope of potential interpretations. Such an approach would go a long way in shaping the necessary, and healthy, discussions among member states that such claims could trigger. In other words, keeping in mind the potential to do harm, assessments of mediation efforts should support, rather than stifle, conflict prevention dialogue and engagement in the public arena.

## WHAT MAKES OR BREAKS A MEDIATION EFFORT?

While assessing the results of a specific multilateral engagement remains fraught with technical and political hurdles, there is little disagreement, in principle, on the factors that seem essential for mediation to succeed. These factors combine four broad distinctions:

- they range from the personal to the structural;
- several are well within the mediator and the mediating organization's control while many are not;
- they usually reinforce one another; and,
- for a few, their degree of relevance generally increases under a multilateral envoy framework.

A common feature of most success factors is that, more often than not, their significance is proved by their absence. Such is the case with conflict party willingnessto negotiate, and the perceived appeal of any alternative to a negotiated agreement, tragically demonstrated in Syria.Other well-documented variables which the mediation community collectively emphasizes as critical to any engagement include the timing of deployment; the legitimacy and personal qualities of the special envoy; the strategic use of thematic expertise to generate options or settle factual questions; and the *incentives* (negative or positive) that a mediation effort may have at its disposal to move the parties forward.

## IN RECENT YEARS, IT HAS SHAPED A GROWING CONSENSUS ON THE NEED TO COMBINE ROBUST, DATA DRIVEN APPROACHES WITH CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS AND, WHERE RELEVANT, IMPORTS FROM OTHER DISCIPLINES SUCH AS PSYCHOLOGY, RATIONAL CHOICE AND GAME THEORY.

As with the methodological constraints described in the previous section, the relevance of several success factors increases when the mediation is conducted under a multilateral approach. With regards to legitimacy, multilateral cachet constitutes a double-edged sword, with claims of supra-national impartiality contending with suspicions by warring parties or other actors of hidden member state agendas and a history of malevolent interference. The perception of the multilateral organization and its special envoy is therefore highly contextual.

The AU's credibility as a mediator varied greatly from Kenya in 2008 to Madagascar in 2009. In Kenya, the AU mediator, Koffi Annan, was quickly accepted as the only mediator and benefitted from a great level of acceptance in the country. In Madagascar, the AU mediator suffered from the organization's difficult history with the island country.

Similar variances beset the UN, the EU, and other regional entities. In Guinea in 2008, the UN's regional special envoy enjoyed wide acceptance, built through a combination of personal efforts and local appreciation for the UN system's long-standing support to the country throughout the crisis. In 2008, the UN's regional Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) mediated the crisis. The UN enjoyed great legitimacy following its decision to maintain a significant presence throughout the violent incidents while other international actors withdrew or severely limited their presence. Such legitimacy, which similarly allowed the UN to offer timely assistance in Kyrgyzstan in 2010, is not something the organization can always take for granted.

Legitimacy can also be buttressed – or undermined – through the choice of status conferred upon the special envoy. In Madagascar, the UN's ability to sustain engagement, both among rival factions and between the international community, was undermined inter alia by the relatively low administrative rank given its mediator. Similar choices confront the EU, with changes in titles to its representatives providing signals, at times unintentional, as to the level of engagement, support and interest on the part of EU member states.

Communication and reporting on the process is a well-recognized mediation tool per se, but, particularly in a multilateral process, it can also make or break the special envoy's legitimacy. Any communication may expose her or him to accusations of member state manipulation and undermine the impartiality and principled approach that multilateralism is meant to embody.

A second factor compounded by a multilateral designation relates to the strength of the mandate. As noted earlier, such strength, which is critical for success, is notoriously difficult to achieve among member states for whom deployment of a special envoy is often the easiest and weakest common denominator they can agree on in the face of a conflict. The mediation in Madagascar provides a compelling illustration, since it can be argued that not even the lead-SADC mediator, let alone the UN and the AU, benefited from clear and robust mediation mandates.

The issue of legitimacy is inextricably and positively linked to the level of international support for a multilateral engagement. The extent to which member states (of the organization and beyond) are aligned behind the special envoy constitutes perhaps the single most determining factor for multilateral diplomatic success. The evidence for such a connection abounds. In Yemen, which up in 2011-12 presented the only "Arab Spring" case of a negotiated agreement, the UN Special Envoy's mediation has been significantly aided by a consistently unified international community within the UN Security Council and the GCC, in stark contrast with the bitter divisions that have undermined the joint LAS-UN engagement in Syria.

Similar examples of international cohesiveness were found in other "success stories": In Kenya in 2008, following an early plethora of competing efforts, the AU mediator achieved widespread support from key member states. In the Great Lakes in 2009, the UN special envoy managed to unify disparate efforts behind one multilateral process. The recent experiences of Syria, Madagascar and, to a lesser extent, Libya, offer a tragic illustration of the impact of disunity, when international divisions play directly into the interests of the warring parties, further weakening their willingness to negotiate and accept multilateral mediation. The UN's Special Envoy in Libya initially benefited from strong support from the UNSC. But this support began to fray following the UNSC authorized and NATO-led military operation. Significant divisions within the AU further undermined his ability to mediate between the two parties.

Sustained, unified international support also allows the special envoy a judicious use of pressures and even threats from various member states. Such mediation tactics are highly risky, and are usually only successful if well-timed and coordinated with relevant member states, as in Kenya, when the possibility of economic sanctions from leading donors was strategically mooted at key moments of the negotiation. Strong support also permits greater coherence with related initiatives designed to complement, rather than contradict, the special envoy's work. These can include track II diplomacy through bilateral channels, and the formation of a team of bilateral envoys under the multilateral framework of a group of member state friends to provide additional incentives and oversight.

For several multilateral organizations, a carrot and stick approach can also be built from within, depending on the weight and depth of the toolbox at their disposal. The ability on the part of the special envoy to leverage the organization's technical and financial resources can significantly contribute to her or his mediation efforts. In this regard, the playing field among multilateral institutions is highly uneven. An EU or a UN special envoy can usually rely on a range of tools, including aid financing and access to specialized expertise throughout a mediation process. In Yemen in 2011-12, for example, the legitimacy of the mediation in the lead-up to the National Dialogue was greatly enhanced by the use of the UN Peacebuilding Fund and the establishment of a trust fund to support the preparatory committee and finance the logistics of the conference proceedings. However, looking back now in 2015, the long-term impact of this intervention needs to be questioned.

Such resources may not need only financial support. An extensive country presence of related actors, e.g. development or humanitarian entities, can also provide the eyes and ears to support the mediation process and the special envoy's analytical capacities. The UN's engagement in Guinea or Kyrgyzstan, whereby the regional special envoy worked closely with UNDP and other agencies in conflict prevention programming, provides an interesting illustration of internal connectivity and its value for mediation. Such reach is however not available to all multilateral institutions. Even in those institutions with multidimensional mandates and capacities, leveraging of political, technical and financial resources in support of a mediation strategy is often under-utilized due to poor internal coordination and institutional silos.

Finally, no peace agreement can result in a sustained settlement in the absence of follow-on capacities and mechanisms for monitoring implementation of key provisions. In this regard, multilateral special envoys are in theory better placed to ensure sustained institutional follow up and support: few, if any, of their institutions ever completely withdraw from the scene following the end of a formal mediation process. In one form or another, the organization remains. The challenge, however, is to ensure that what stays behind is equipped, politically and financially, to support and monitor the aftermath. Here as well, the record is mixed, even for large multilateral organizations such as the UN, the EU, or the AU. This fact is often omitted from mediation claims, as this success criterion captures, along with the others just cited, a number of the political and technical dilemmas these organizations face when assessing their special envoy diplomacy.

## DILEMMAS FOR MULTILATERAL INSTITUTIONS

The list of success factors appears quite daunting – and in fact, no single mediation effort has benefited or will mostly likely ever benefit from all of them coalescing simultaneously. For multilateral special envoy deployments, this reality has two important corollaries.

First, as the factors listed above demonstrate, multilateral special envoys usually work in circumstances where they have at best only limited control over a number of important variables. From the mandate to access to resources, their operational space for independent maneuvering is beholden to a range of actors and motivations. In only a very few exceptional cases do the stars all align to provide an optimal mediation environment.

This fact shapes a second reality. For multilateral institutions, assertions related to their special envoy interventions are fraught with pitfalls. Beyond the technical challenges in assessing impact, any claim of results achieved must carefully factor in imperatives of national ownership and leadership in ensuring lasting political settlements. In particular, taking credit for success can rankle national sensitivities and upset delicate member state dynamics.

For multilateral institutions, these realities carry hard choices and implications across a number of areas. Among them, the initial decision to deploy, and the choice of special envoy, loom as the most sensitive. Regardless of the genesis for such deployment, multilateral organizations must communicate clear understanding of the elements that contribute to the "chemistry" in order to create the right "baseline" at date of entry for future strategy formulation. Questions of whether the time is ripe for multilateral engagement, and who is the right mediator, are critical, but they are not always left to the decision of the organizations themselves. Hence – especially when the choice to deploy is influenced by heavy member state pressures – multilateral organizations must improve their ability to shape discourse on how it will be assessed. This can be achieved by tracking and keeping record of the (often suboptimal) conditions in which the special envoy was deployed.

Similarly, astute assessment is required to inform the exit strategy, and the timing and conditions under which a multilateral special envoy should end its mediation. Here again, in complex situations, the decision will often balance competing factors. These may at times include political agendas and "do no harm" considerations, which can apply when a multilateral engagement seems to prolong the violence. In these cases, the organization must keep a close finger on the member states' pulse when thinking about initiating and publicizing any formal assessment of its mediation engagement. The conduct of an assessment can itself be potentially misconstrued as a harbinger of changes that key stakeholders may not necessarily wish for.

Finally, operational constraints on multilateral envoys have implications as to how the organizations report on their mediation efforts. Particularly in cases of success, recognizing the international mediator's role doesn't necessarily conflict with ensuring national ownership of the peace attained, or with giving credit to member state support. In their efforts to tread that careful line, multilateral organizations often end up either downplaying or overstating their case. This balancing act takes many forms. On one hand, claims of success are often overblown and unsubstantiated by robust evidence. On the other, the responsibility for failures is unduly accepted. And too often for multilateral diplomacy, evidence of genuine success resembles Melville's description of misery: it hides aloof, so we deem that it is none.

## WHEN ARE ENVOYS EFFECTIVE?

Assessments of multilateral special envoy mediations bring into full display the fragile balancing act that is inherent to multilaterally-led diplomacy. Even reporting on results poses challenges that extend beyond the technical obstacles associated with evaluation of conflict prevention initiatives. As such, for organizations such as the UN, the AU or the EU, reflections on their special envoy deployments provide a stark reminder of the realities of multilateralism. Their envoys are rarely in full control of all success factors, and their mediation efforts and how they present them must constantly balance competing agendas.

These realities need not however obfuscate opportunities for multilateral organizations to shape a compelling narrative for their special envoy diplomacy. First they must acknowledge constraints, and then frame discussions of their mediation engagement around the core ethics of multilateralism. In the low-control, multi-causal environment in which these organizations operate, greater transparency in choices made and principles invoked, as well as enhanced clarity of responsibilities, would send a powerful signal to their member states: multilateralism is often the worst form of mediation – except for all the others.

## CASE STUDIES: MAIN FEATURES OF SELECTED MEDIATION PROCESSES

### Madagascar 2009: SADC, UN, and AU

- Lack of unified support from the international community: competing agendas and objectives
- Lack of clarity on roles amongst SADC, AU and UN mediators
- Good analytical capabilities within the UN mediation team but weak logistical support from the UNCT
- Weak mandate and status of the UN Special Envoy
- Weak political support within the organization

### Kyrgyzstan 2010: UN and OESCE

- Standing and access, of UN Special Envoy and UN SRSG (regional)
- Effective collaboration between UN and OESCE
- Adequate timing of deployment
- UN systems and capacities on the ground to monitor the situation and inform the mediation strategies

### Guinea 2008: UN

- Accessibility and responsiveness of UN SRSG (regional)
- UN SRSG mediation skills and approach
- Analytical capacities on the ground, and logistical support
- Link between mediation and programmatic tools and resources, through, inter alia, effective collaboration with UNDP
- Country acceptance and legitimacy of the UN, based on history of UNCT presence and support during the crisis

## Yemen 2011-2012: UN and GCC

- Strong, unified international community support (UNSC, GCC) Accessibility and responsiveness of UN Special Envoy

- UN Special Envoy mediation skills and approach

- Link between mediation and programmatic tools, through, inter alia, trust fund for national dialogue and UN PBF funding

## Libya 2011: UN

- Contradicting international goals and strategies

- Party (un)willingness

- Weak mandate of the Special Envoy and lack of programmatic tools resources to complement mediation effort

## Kenya 2008: AU

- Unified international community behind one mediation process

- Standing and access, of AU Special Envoy

- Weak alternatives on both sides

- Strong external pressure at key moments

- Smart mediation approaches (communication, expert inputs)

*The **Center on International Cooperation at NYU** creates the ideas, analysis and policies needed to transform international cooperation on leading global challenges, such as increasing peace and security, strengthening fragile states, securing strategic resources and tackling climate change. | **Twitter**: **@nyucic***

COUNT FOLKE BERNADOTTE, UN MEDIATOR FOR PALESTINE, AND HIS STAFF, IN A SEPTEMBER 1948 BRIEFING FOR UN MILITARY OBSERVERS PRIOR TO THEIR DEPLOYMENT IN THE HOLY LAND. LEFT TO RIGHT ARE: GENERAL FRANK STONER, CHIEF OF COMMUNICATIONS FOR THE MEDIATOR; COUNT BERNADOTTE; COLONEL NILS BRUNSSEN, SWEDEN, CHIEF MILITARY OBSERVER IN JERUSALEM; AND DR. RALPH BUNCHE, PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL. ©UN MULTIMEDIA

# SUPPORT MECHANISMS: MULTILATERAL, MULTI-LEVEL, AND MUSHROOMING

by Teresa Whitfield

**THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SUPPORT MECHANISMS REPRESENTS A SHIFT IN THE MANNER IN WHICH PEACEMAKING IS CONCEIVED AND CONDUCTED. WHILE THIS IS WELCOME, THE INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY TO PROVIDE EFFECTIVE SUPPORT HAS NOT YET CAUGHT UP WITH THE COLLECTIVE ASPIRATION TO OFFER IT.**

The idea that "peace processes must be well-supported politically, technically and financially", as UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon stated in the introduction to the **UN Guidance for Effective Mediation**, is something of a truism. Certainly, no one would ever advocate poor political technical or financial support to a peace process. But the appearance of mediation support as a dedicated activity, along with formal mechanisms to pursue it, is a relatively recent development with significant implications for the work of multilateral envoys.

The establishment of support mechanisms represents a shift in the manner in which peacemaking is conceived and conducted. While this is welcome, the institutional capacity to provide effective support has not yet caught up with the collective aspiration to offer it. In some cases, senior envoys may resist the idea of support outside their trusted staff, grounded in the confidence that they have been engaged for their lifetime experience and authority, and no further expertise or training is required. In others, resource constraints present a problem. Elsewhere, there may be an open door to mediation support and the resources available to provide it - the negotiation of the Libreville agreement on the Central African Republic (CAR) in 2013 for example - while the underlying conditions for a durable settlement are not present. Even when effective support is provided, it may have a limited causal impact on the outcome.

The establishment of a Mediation Support Unit (MSU) within the UN led to rapid understanding of the utility of a standing support structure for good offices, conflict prevention and the mediation efforts of an envoy. Regional organizations have sought to improve their capacity to support envoys with technical expertise and comparative experience, drawing on others like the UN, EU and sometimes non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to help them.

Individual governments and NGOs have also developed their own support mechanisms, frequently with a disposition to extend support to others as well. The Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, or HD Centre, established its Mediation Support Unit in 2007; Swisspeace and the Center for Security Studies, ETH Zurich, established the Mediation Support Project in 2005; more recently in September 2015, the United States, in a **Presidential Memorandum** that represented the first guidance on support to UN peace operations in two decades, made a clear commitment to support for conflict prevention and mediation. This work is informed by a growing body of guidance, guidelines, training and other materials, as a well as a healthy degree of cross-fertilization among peace processes on issues such as constitutional reform, national dialogues and the inclusion of gender perspectives.

## THE EMERGENCE OF MEDIATION SUPPORT

Mediators and envoys have long relied on a combination of a small, unified team and the capacity to call on specialist knowledge from outside when appropriate. But for many years the process to assemble both was surprisingly ad hoc. Even successful negotiations conducted from inside the United Nations, such as those on El Salvador, Guatemala and East Timor during the 1990s, were largely dependent on the personal contacts and initiative of the envoys and their small teams, rather than any additional institutional support. A long-running **project** developed by the UN Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) sought to preserve and pass on the lessons gleaned from the experiences of envoys and representatives of the Secretary-General, but there was little follow-through in making use of them in any operational sense.

In recognition of the growing disconnect between the demand for UN mediation and the resources devoted to it, the report of the **Secretary-General's High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change** observed in 2004 that "mediators and negotiators need adequate support". Two years later, the UN Department of Political Affairs (DPA) established the first **Mediation Support Unit.** It took shape quite slowly amidst considerable skepticism amongst some envoys who were its potential beneficiaries.

Attention to mediation and the legitimacy of mediation support received a boost in 2009 with the publication of a **report** to the General Assembly by the Secretary-General on "enhancing mediation and its support activities". This report advocated the need for "systematic preparation" for mediation, and called for UN mediators to have at their disposal "a reasonable level of operational

support". In addition to political analysis, this support was described as including: "(a) experts on the design and management of mediation, facilitation and national dialogue processes; (b) thematic experts from specialized partners within the United Nations system, as well as external experts — on issues such as security arrangements, constitution-making, elections, power-sharing, the rule of law, human rights, refugees and internally displaced persons, gender, child protection, transitional justice, and wealth-sharing; (c) flexible funding arrangements; and (d) versatile administrative and logistics options for different situations".

The report further stressed the need for closer partnerships with regional and sub-regional organizations and other mediation actors, noting that DPA "should be ready to offer its support to mediation partners, assist in building their mediation capacity, and exchange lessons learned and best practice".

## SETTING A STANDARD: THE UN MEDIATION SUPPORT UNIT

The UN's Mediation Support Unit has as its primary "clients" the envoys and representatives of the UN Secretary-General. But it has also developed as a global asset, available to the mediation efforts of Member States, regional and sub-regional organizations and other partners through the delivery of services in three main areas: technical and operational support for peace processes; capacity-building; and guidance development, lessons learned and best practices in the area of mediation.

The MSU's technical and operational support usually takes the form of assistance in the development of strategies and advice on thematic issues. These include security arrangements (ceasefires, DDR and SSR), constitution-making, power-sharing, natural resources (wealth-sharing), and gender and social inclusion. The MSU also develops mediation guidance, and captures lessons learned and best practices for mediators and their teams. One recent example was guidance on **natural resources and conflict**, jointly developed by DPA and the UN Environment Programme. Capacity-building and training on mediation and negotiation techniques and skills, strategy development, and process design is offered to UN mediators and envoys in widely varying configurations. Even within the UN, some envoys draw on the MSU a great deal, while others hardly at all.

In addition to its own staff, the MSU is home to the Standby Team of Mediation Experts, who are based in their home countries and can be deployed anywhere in the world within 72 hours. It maintains a mediation roster of senior mediators, operational-level mediators and technical-level experts who are available to be hired as consultants on a longer-term basis, either by the UN or other actors. Finally, the MSU has developed partnerships with a network of NGOs and academic institutions that can be called upon to provide expertise in support of mediation, facilitation and dialogue - again, either by the UN or by others.

A steady rise in the engagement of the MSU speaks eloquently to growing acceptance of the utility of mediation support. Deployments have included support to UN envoys working on Syria, in the Great Lakes, and in the negotiations between Guyana and Venezuela, to peace processes taking place in contexts where UN peacekeeping operations are present, such as the CAR and Mali, as well as to processes such as the Kampala talks between the government of the Democratic Republic of Congo and the M23 rebels, led by other actors. In an interesting example of variegated support, during 2013 and 2014 the Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Yemen drew on both the MSU and external experts as well as political and diplomatic support provided by the Gulf Cooperation Council, EU and five permanent members of the Security Council in the "Group of 10".

## REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND SUPPORT CAPACITY

The perceived success of the MSU has been one of the factors encouraging regional organizations to develop their own capacities for envoy support. This has taken place to a somewhat uneven extent, reflecting the different levels of peacemaking activity within regional and sub-regional organizations (ASEAN's limited involvement in regional peacemaking means no envoys and therefore no support mechanisms), as well as the distinct level of resources they can draw upon. In some cases organizations have pursued separate units, mirroring the MSU within the UN: the EU has a Mediation Support Team; the OSCE and Commonwealth established a dedicated Conflict Prevention Centre and Good Offices Section respectively. Others, including the Organization of American States and the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie, have sought to build capacity within existing structures.

In 2009 the African Union (AU) launched a two-year "Plan of Action to Build the AU's Mediation Capacity", with the backing of the UN and non-governmental mediation support actors who joined forces in an AU Partner Group to avoid duplication in their efforts. The plan foresaw a training curriculum that was developed by the AU in collaboration with the South Africa-based civil society organisation ACCORD and the Crisis Management Institute of Finland. Efforts were bolstered by desk-to-desk, lessons-learned exercises organized by the UN MSU. The HD Centre facilitated the development of Standard Operating Procedures to help define the support the AU Commission is expected to extend to its mediation teams and envoys in the field and helped produce a **three-volume handbook for AU practitioners on managing peace processes**.

Progress in building the AU's support mechanisms has, however, been disappointingly slow. Some Member States' perception that an independent institutional capacity within the AU Comission might threaten their interests limited the resources they were prepared to commit. Consequently, its mediation support capacity remained embedded in its conflict management division, and the support arrangements available for AU envoys something of a mixed bag. Former President Thabo Mbeki, as Chairperson of the High Level Implementation Panel for Sudan and South Sudan, could draw on around fifteen experts, some seconded from the World Bank or governments. Former President Alpha Konare, Chairperson of the High Level Panel for Egypt, had four or five experts, while other envoys generally have more skeletal teams. The high level of most envoys means that they receive no formal training, and the literature, tools, management skills and knowledge developed in recent years are still quite scarcely used. A recent decision that the Peace and Security Department will host a new mediation support unit should help introduce a more consistent use of expertise and resources.

Sub-regional organizations in Africa have prioritized the creation of standing mediation support divisions or units. But the pressures of other work and a lack of resources have meant that they have also taken shape quite slowly. In February 2010 the ECOWAS Commission decided to establish a Mediation Facilitation Division, but progress in putting it in place – it was only formally constituted in 2015 - was painfully slow. In the interim, ECOWAS was adept in finding support from other sources, including the UN Office in West Africa, the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding, and the HD Centre. Meanwhile, in 2012 the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) established a small Mediation Support Unit (this had also been under discussion since 2010). The Southern African Development Community took steps in the same direction in 2014, operationalizing mediation, conflict prevention and preventative diplomacy structures that had originally been agreed to at a SADC Summit meeting in 2004 (and as the need for support was highlighted by mediation interventions in Lesotho in 2007, Zimbabwe in 2008, and Madagascar in 2009). The IGAD unit was particularly active in the establishment of the office of the Special Envoy for South Sudan, and all IGAD envoys are required to undertake training in mediation skills and conflict resolution prior to deployment. More broadly, however, the integration of these sub-regional capacities with AU structures will likely prove a difficult task.

The European Union has long been an important donor to, and partner in, the mediation work of others, but it has developed its own understanding and approach to mediation only relatively recently. The **Concept on Strengthening of EU Mediation and Dialogue Capacities**, adopted in 2009, acknowledged the particularity of the EU as a mediation actor: alone among the regional organizations it has no internal mandate, although it does have some internal involvements, such as in Cyprus. The Concept recognised EU Special Representatives (EUSRs), who answer to Member States through the Political and Security Committee, as a mediation resource but also acknowledged the role of other EU actors. The expectation was implicit that the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the Heads of EU delegations would increasingly assume responsibilities in the field of mediation and support to peace processes, not least because of the political role assigned them by the Lisbon treaty. In several contexts, Myanmar and Yemen for example, Heads of Delegation indeed been able to play a positive role.

A Mediation Support Team (MST) established within the EEAS is loosely modelled on the UN's MSU. It has a broad remit reflecting the far-ranging reach of EU mediation and mediation support and the complex institutional means by which it is delivered. The team offers operational support; knowledge management and the assessment of lessons learned; training and capacity building; and networking and coordination with partners in the UN, AU, other regional organizations and civil society. Its clients include those EUSRs with facilitation/mediation tasks within their mandates, the top hierarchy of the EEAS involved in mediation efforts (as in the case of the Iran nuclear talks), Heads of EU Delegations as well as EEAS Managing Directors, envoys or advisers who served as facilitators or mediators in a specific context (as in the case of the Great Lakes and Myanmar).

In recognition of the role played by various MEPs as mediators or facilitators of dialogue (as for example the high profile involvement of former Presidents Pat Cox and Alexander Kwásniewski in Ukraine, but also the role of others in Sudan or Myanmar), in 2014, the European Parliament set up the European Parliamentary Mediation Support (EPMS) Service. The EPSM seeks to provide expert professional support for MEPs engaged in conflict prevention, mediation and facilitation efforts within the framework of the EU's comprehensive mediation strategy.

## NON-GOVERNMENTAL AND HYBRID SUPPORT

The challenge of aligning the EU's engagements is indicative of an increasingly crowded stage of envoys and support structures. As explored elsewhere in this series, competition between multilateral – as well as national and non-governmental – envoys and actors at the political level can be a significant impediment to effective peacemaking. There are, however, grounds for cautious optimism that the prospects for coordination among support mechanisms may be improving.

This optimism is rooted in a number of different developments: first, there is new appreciation within the UN, EU, and other multilateral organizations of the value of partnerships, collaboration and cross-institutional support. The UN MSU, for example, is in 2015 providing support to the OSCE in Ukraine and IGAD in South Sudan. Another positive development is the disposition shown by some institutions and organizations to supply staff to multilateral envoys. A staff member of the HD Centre was among the team of outside experts providing support to the UN's Special Advisor on Yemen in 2013 and 2014, while Swisspeace has provided in-kind support to the UN including by seconding a staff member to the team of the Secretary-General's Personal Envoy to Western Sahara. Further signs of optimism come from experiments with hybrid support structures, as well as concerted efforts at collaboration within the mediation support community, most vividly illustrated by the formation and development of a Mediation Support Network (MSN).

The MSN was established in September 2008 and met for the first time in Switzerland. It is a global network composed of the UN's MSU and primarily non-governmental organizations that support mediation in peace negotiations. Over the years its membership has grown to around twenty regionally diverse members. They meet once or twice a year in order to exchange information, explore opportunities for collaboration in joint activities and share analysis of trends and emerging challenges in peace mediation. Although not specifically constituted to provide support to multilateral envoys, this network and the presence within it of a number of hybrid actors (e.g., Swisspeace and the U.S. Institute of Peace) that retain direct ties to their respective governments, as well as others regularly engaged in the support of sub-regional organizations, has improved the exchange of information within the sector and helped break down barriers to more structured coordination.

The EU's interest in more hybrid structures of mediation support is suggested by both the initiation in January 2014 of a project intended to facilitate EU mediation support to third parties, and the establishment of the European Institute for Peace (EIP). The project "Technical assistance to European resources for mediation support", or ERMES, is implemented by a consortium of non-governmental mediation support entities able to provide fast and flexible support to international, regional and local actors. The EIP, meanwhile, resembles USIP in its quasi-governmental status, but with a narrower thematic focus. It is conceived as "**an independent partner to the European Union and Europe**" and pursues mediation, informal dialogue and multi-track diplomacy and acts "as a flexible, external tool in support of EU mediation efforts where the EU has limited freedom to act".

## MORE SUPPORT, BUT MORE CHALLENGES?

The mushrooming of support mechanisms is a positive development in the peacemaking field. It has encouraged an understanding of mediation as a professional activity which can benefit from structured and professional support; contributed to the production of a rapidly expanding body of guidelines, guidance and other materials that reflect best practice and lessons learned (or at least identified, as the field is awash with examples of lessons not learned); and put in place the means to deploy high quality expertise and support on a range of issues to those multilateral envoys who request it. As the report of **High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations**, submitted to the Secretary-General in June 2015, suggested, it has also opened up the possibility of dedicated support to help national governments and others address emerging conflict situations.

It is however, premature to declare the emergence of mediation support structures and mechanisms as an unqualified success. Core functions in support of conflict prevention and mediation by the UN are still not funded by the UN's Regular Budget – a situation the High-Level Independent Panel criticized as "unacceptable". The building of mediation capacity within some regional and multilateral organisations has met with resistance, institutional rivalries and resource problems. Meanwhile, the profusion of support on offer has not always been adroitly linked to the envoys concerned. And even the best mediation support – whose impact is always difficult to quantify -- cannot be expected to compensate for problems in the appointments of multilateral envoys, the institutional limitations or overcrowding of the political space with which they operate, let alone the more fundamental structural or regional obstacles to settlement seen in many of today's conflicts.

In sum, mediation support works best when offered to an envoy capably leading a peace process, or at least his or her engagement within it. Such support can be an extremely useful, indeed essential, auxiliary feature of a complex peace process, but it cannot and will not rescue or redeem a process that may be failing for other reasons.

*Teresa Whitfield is the Senior Adviser to the President & Head of Front Office at the International Crisis Group; an earlier draft of this article was completed when she was Senior Adviser to the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue.*  | ***Twitter:*** *@WhitfieldTeresa*

# REFLECTIONS ON PEACE OPERATIONS

©UNMIL PHOTO/STATON WINTER

# REFLECTIONS ON A CAREER IN PEACE OPERATIONS

Karin Landgren

## THE DEATH OF TWO STAFF MEMBERS TO EBOLA WAS MY MOST DIFFICULT MOMENT

*Karin Landgren* *was the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) overseeing the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) when in 2014 the Ebola epidemic struck the West African nation. Landgren calls it her most challenging time over a long and distinguished international career that began at The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), including working in the wake of the Rwanda genocide. The leadership position in Liberia was also the apex of Landgren's work on peace operations that included appointments in Nepal and Burundi, where as SRSG she headed two special political missions as they wound up and began the difficult transition to peacebuilding.*

*Landgren harnessed this breadth of experience when leading UNMIL, a peacekeeping mission most at threat from a disease rather than armed combatants. Completion of her assignment in early July coincided with the launch of Uniting Our Strengths for Peace, a report by the High-level Independent Panel on UN Peace Operations (HIPPO). In an interview with CIC Deputy Director Jim Della-Giacoma, Landgren emphasized the importance of the panel's emphasis on political analysis, strategy and strengthening the field orientation of UN peace operations. The following is an edited transcript of this conversation.*

GLOBAL PEACE OPERATIONS REVIEW | ANNUAL COMPILATION 2015                231

**Jim Della-Giacoma: The High-level Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) has produced its report Uniting Our Strengths for Peace. It is a lengthy document with much detail. Can you start by reflecting on what you regard as some of the important points from this report?**

**Karin Landgren:** Finding peaceful resolutions and preventing the escalation of crisis is the core business of the UN. Every country, every region is somewhere on that continuum from stability to fragility to complete breakdown, and as the UN we need to be on top of that.

There are a few points of entry to this. One way is more active political analysis with partners. The UN shouldn't feel that it needs do this on its own. More could be done to reach out to partners for these analyses on the range of issues relevant to conflict prevention and resolution – political, security, human rights, social and economic factors. I've just come from a discussion on the structure of the Liberian economy, which I see as an impediment to ending that country's fragility. Liberia is still running on a pre-war economic model, an enclave economy that benefits a small elite. Tell me that is not a socio-political problem? And yet when I raised the economy at a meeting on peace consolidation, a colleague told me that participants' eyes glazed over, as if the economy were a separate matter from stability. It's essential that the UN get the political analysis right.

A second and related issue is, at what point does a peacekeeping operation transition? This is an active question for us right now in Liberia. Sometimes one hears from the Council that "it has been over ten years", as if ten years were an outer limit to a peacekeeping operation. Or, that "the country has held two successful presidential elections". Strong political analysis can get us away from formulaic approaches to transition, and towards thinking of transition as part of the overall political strategy.

**JDG: Are you saying that these decisions are solely based on factors found here or in the UN Security Council in New York rather than any analysis of what's going on in the Liberian economy?**

**KL:** These decisions aren't bereft of analysis, no, but many pressures are brought to bear on Mission drawdown. Liberia's own fragility and its incomplete reconciliation have not always been front and center.

A third issue around political strategies and necessary change is the number of actors crowding for space both inside and outside the UN, especially in post-conflict situations. One day it's crowded – and then suddenly the caravan moves on. That was the situation in Liberia, pre-Ebola: after the Ivorian emergency subsided, few UN and NGO partners remained outside the capital. How do we attain a political strategy that also drives the agencies, funds and programs in a given country's situation? How can this become true UN coherence, rather than the supply-side thinking that is still dominant? The agencies, funds and programs do excellent work, but we haven't yet moved to a UN approach that's more than the sum of its parts. We have an excellent country team in Monrovia, and could do even more with stronger UN integration. We're not there yet.

**JDG: Uniting Our Strengths for Peace argues for a more field-focused and people-centered approach to peace operations. Having just come from three years in Liberia, is there anything in the report that you think could have an impact on the lives of people in those countries where there are UN peace operations?**

**KL:** The most striking recommendation in that regard is on engaging with communities. That's also one of the biggest challenges for peacekeeping, where staff risk being insulated – not just in the white cars and all, but because of real danger. How do we talk to local communities? How do we know we're talking to the right people? If Ebola taught us one thing it was the importance of supporting change at community level. There were evident benefits of encouraging behavioral changes, and also of discouraging rumours and false beliefs. Communities in Lofa that thought Ebola was brought by Muslims, for instance. For successful engagement with local communities, the role of partners is essential, reaching out to experts, including anthropologists, who have invested their lives studying the country. I was with UNHCR at the time of the Rwandan genocide and remember when HCR engaged with Gerard Prunier to expand the organisation's understanding of that crisis and the way forward. National expertise is the most valuable, in this regard, as long as one takes care not to expose local contacts and sources to added risk.

**JDG: What about conducting public opinion research? Some peace operations around the world have tried such techniques. Have you used them and, if so, how did you incorporate them into your decision-making?**

**KL:** Yes – in Burundi we worked with Afrobarometer, as I recall. BNUB [the United Nations Office in Burundi], the Special Political Mission I headed, had developed benchmarks with the government, and many of them lacked baselines. The mission needed to gather data and opinions from scratch. In the end, the government was on board with this polling, and the results were useful in helping BNUB understand where work needed to focus. In Liberia, UNMIL has sampled opinion in locations where the Mission has already drawn down, seeking to understand whether the public's sense of security has changed with the Mission's local absence. I absolutely endorse having more social science research.

**JDG: What kind of community outreach did you do?**

**KL:** Personally, I traveled a lot. One of the great assets of UNMIL was that in addition to its military and police presence, we had a civilian office in every one of Liberia's fifteen counties. These offices developed strong local relationships with superintendents, NGOs, peace committees, women's groups, representatives of religious groups, of youth and others. UNMIL had also been promoting the establishment of county security councils. At the time of Ebola, UNMIL was the outfit on the ground that had national reach, local contacts and trust. These were assets UNMEER [the UN Mission for Ebola Emergency Response] and WHO could plug right into. I would meet with these individuals and groups, and also counted on the UNMIL county offices to keep an ear to the ground and report back. One good initiative was UNMIL's use of Quick Impact Projects. QIPs aren't new, but UNMIL stepped that up and sought more local involvement in decisions. And when Ebola hit, we turned all our QIPs to Ebola support.

**JDG: What kind of projects were these?**

**KL:** They were tracing projects, communications initiatives, or providing supplies. They were whatever the local superintendent and community said they needed most to respond better to Ebola. It differed all over the country. I do think that missions need more programmatic resources in general. But missions aren't necessarily set up to manage projects. It's useful to have mission staff from agencies where projects are their bread and butter. There can be a disconnect between the country team having the resources and the project capacity, while the mission has been mandated with the strategic lead on a particular issue. UNMIL sought in the current budget to double our QIPs funding from $1 million to $2 million, and we got it. This shows a change in understanding of needs of peacekeeping missions. Just a few years ago Security Council members were more sceptical about peacekeeping's use of QIPs, seeing that as development work. The ACABQ [Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions] and 5th Committee have understood the importance for peace operations to have this resource.

**JDG: The World Development Report of 2011 tells us moving from conflict to stability is a long-term project. The average life of a UN peace operation is increasing and is now about 15 years. We recently also witnessed violence return to Burundi. How long does it take to create peace and stability?**

**KL:** Burundi is problematic for drawing broader lessons, I would suggest, in that the current developments are so directly related to the president himself. Had he stepped aside, done something akin to what [former Nigerian President] Goodluck Jonathan did, he would certainly have cemented his place in history as a visionary leader. The East African Community is in some ways a model of a regional arrangement, and has been supportive of Burundi's movement towards long-term stability. But ECOWAS [Economic Community of West African States] has found it easier than the EAC [East African Community] to discuss presidential term limits.

How long is long enough (for peace and stability)? I would like to see the Security Council not chop and change mandates too often. We're seeing better-crafted mandates, but still they can be overly heavy. One should remember, though, that a mandate is also a communications tool. The Council has moods, too. There was a period a few years ago when they were very keen on benchmarking, which I've found useful in both Burundi and Liberia. Another Security Council initiative a couple of years ago directed missions to review the transfer of tasks from the mission to the UN country team. This was less productive, since peacekeeping missions aren't generally engaged in tasks that can readily be handed off to a UN agency, fund or program not mandated by the Security Council. But both initiatives go in the direction of recognizing the range of potential drivers of conflict, as well as the need for seamless transitions involving other UN actors.

**JDG: What were some of the specific lessons you learnt from leading UNMIL during the Ebola crisis?**

**KL:** UNMIL's response was clear: we needed to remain in Liberia, while protecting our personnel and giving maximum support to the crisis – which went beyond a health crisis. We heard from some senior UN actors that the time of Ebola was not a time for state-building, but only for emergency response. That was incorrect. Ebola turned out to be a useful time to work on and advocate for state-building: the needs, the lessons, were so striking, they gave a push to decentralization in Liberia, for example. The capital, Monrovia, was a bottleneck for Ebola response. Ebola also led UNMIL and the Government to implement a very practical approach to decongesting prisons by reducing pre-trial detention. There was a great fear of Ebola entering overcrowded prison environments packed with pre-trial detainees who make up about 70 per cent of the prison population. That the crisis gave clarity and focus to investments needed in state-building was a silver lining. It was hard to argue over structural reasons for Liberia's weak capacity to respond to a shock of this nature.

**JDG: How did other aspects of the mission adapt to Ebola?**

**KL:** The mission's structure didn't change, but I convened our Crisis Management Team daily, and the heads of UN Country Team members weekly. We needed to adapt our exposure and strengthen the knowledge and confidence of our personnel, because my first task was making it possible for UNMIL to remain present and effective.

We also needed to persuade the capitals of troop- and police-contributing countries [TCCs/PCCs] that Ebola was a manageable risk, because we needed their people to stay. Some TCCs contemplated pulling their people out. Much as I may have told everyone that we signed up for a degree of risk when we signed up for peacekeeping, nobody felt they had signed up for a risk like Ebola. But this would have been the wrong moment to abandon Liberia. Discussing how to stay was consistent with current UN security policy.

Ebola revealed a level of national fragility. There were some security incidents, there was public mistrust, there was popular dissatisfaction with the failure promptly to collect the dead. The Liberian security sector itself was being deployed nationally, but often lacked protective equipment and training. At a very practical level UNMIL gave logistical support, training and supplies to our counterparts, and stepped up logistics support to the UN family as well. UNMIL Radio, which reaches 85% of Liberia and is highly trusted, quickly began broadcasting Ebola information in 17 languages, including Liberian English. UNMIL provided advice to the government at central and county level. We worked with non-UN organizations like Médecins Sans Frontières and the CDC [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention] and members of the UN family to review what ought to be done. No one had seen an epidemic like this before. It didn't fulfill WHO's prediction that it would flare and then burn itself out. There was learning and adaptation on everyone's part.

We adapted our human rights monitoring, starting up an Ebola Rights Watch. Several direct and indirect consequences of Ebola had human rights implications, whether it was the army being called out, the state of emergency declaration, the ostracism experienced by Ebola victims, or rumor-mongering to the detriment of some communities.

**JDG: And were you able to manage the risk [to staff]?**

**KL:** Yes, up to a point. We kept all our thousands of personnel safe for six months. We were challenged in obtaining rapid response to UNMIL's increased medical support needs, including guarantees of MEDEVAC [medical evacuation]. An eye-opener was the U.S. evacuating two of its nationals from Liberia at the end of July 2014. Up until that moment, the general sense was that one didn't move people with Ebola, and certainly not to an Ebola-free country. With that one gesture, the U.S. showed that this could be done safely − and it was the right thing to do. This helped advance discussions UNMIL was having with Headquarters. Mind you it still took our Headquarters a while to sort out the MEDEVAC question and I would have liked greater alacrity on that score.

There is a variable with Ebola that you cannot control for, and that is whether people are telling the truth about having had risky contacts. Ebola monitoring relies on self-reporting. At UNMIL, we couldn't monitor what people did outside working hours. One staff member denied any risk of exposure, and came to the UNMIL premises on the day she died; our UNMIL lab technician became infected, we assume in the course of responding to her. In the space of about two weeks we lost two colleagues. That was simply devastating. By the time our lab technician passed away in mid-October, the epidemic was declining. In December, we had two further Ebola cases among our personnel, both of whom survived. The death of two staff members to Ebola was my most difficult moment in the mission.

**JDG: Your career in peace operations includes a number of missions in transition. What reflections do you have on the evolution from peacekeeping to peace building? How do we sustain the peace?**

**KL:** Often sustaining the peace is about strengthening national institutions and public trust in those institutions − whether this means participatory political processes, the rule of law, having a viable security sector, or translating core elements of peace agreements into constitutional reform. These require the support of many partners. We shouldn't really refer to just Peacebuilding Commissions, Peacebuilding Support Offices, and the Peacebuilding Fund when talking about the UN's peacebuilding architecture. That's too limiting to constitute the UN's entire peacebuilding machinery. Peacebuilding is a bigger, broader and more inclusive job.

Smooth and seamless transitions are where the rubber meets the roads in terms of Headquarters structures. The UN now has different models of follow-on presence to a peacekeeping mission. We need to get away from saying, "This is now shifting from being a peacekeeping operation to being a special political mission." Instead of going straight to those categories, which can trigger templated thinking, the design of an evolving UN presence should begin with the analysis of the country's changing need for UN support. Categorization can come later. I would like to see transitions planned early and with all UN actors in the room – including the agencies, funds and programs.

**JDG: You've come up through the agencies and have had a number of appointments in different countries. How did you acquire the experience to be an SRSG? Looking back, which were the most valuable moments that prepared you for this leadership role?**

**KL:** I've spent over sixteen years in the field, and started my career with UNHCR. That was extremely valuable partly because UNHCR is so field-oriented. The assumption is that the field is the center of gravity; it's where you're delivering, where refugees are being protected or not. It's the fieldwork by which the organisation will be judged. The headquarters enterprise is in support of the field, and it has surprised me that anybody could think differently about this. The HIPPO report makes valuable recommendations around having a stronger field orientation.

With HCR as well – working on humanitarian issues that were highly political, and were matters of life and death – one could be in the field as a P1 or P2 and be in charge of making a critical difference to someone's survival and protection. I saw some of the best of the UN while working with UNHCR. Another valuable experience was working together with the military peacekeepers during the war in former Yugoslavia, in the early 1990s. Coming from a human rights and humanitarian background, I approached that engagement with some hesitation, and was surprised at what I found. When the military were good they were really great, efficient, prompt, and sometimes more straightforward than working with civilians. So the whole field orientation, the protection orientation, the human rights and refugee protection aspects, and the conflict experience I think have stood me in very good stead.

Field orientation also means rotation. The expectation that just about everyone should rotate is also a practical expression of giving priority to the field. I would like to take rotation thinking further and see rotation among the main field-based agencies and the Secretariat as well, and UN field missions. This would give us a strong mix of skills, while also helping bridge the gaps in understanding that can arise between agencies, funds and programs and peace operations.

Early in my career I headed the UNHCR staff representatives, so I have a sort of industrial relations perspective that comes in handy when running a large mission or negotiating in any way. HCR gave a lot of leeway to its representatives in the field, backing their decisions. UN peace operations need this, too. It's frustrating being second-guessed by Headquarters. The Secretary General has told us: "SRSG's, you are the captains of your ship, you are the CEOs of your operations." Headquarters needs to get fully behind this idea. It's painful for an SRSG to read the HIPPO criticism of the calibre of field leadership. But if that's the view, then the UN has to invest more in that leadership.

Collegiality is important, too. We cannot achieve lasting results through command and control, through directives. We advance by a shared sense of the enterprise and of the desired outcomes. One needs a high degree of unity within the field mission, because who knows the hour or the day when a crisis may hit you. Will your people be with you then? One of my most useful experiences in Liberia, as a mission manager, was meeting with my Liberian staff in small groups. Until then, there had only been town hall-

type meetings. UNMIL has about a thousand national staff. I learned a lot about my national colleagues, and about strengthening communication within the mission. This dialogue started six or seven months before the Ebola crisis and gave me a stronger basis for communicating with all staff later about Ebola. Personal communication and predictability by mission leadership help create trust, and people do their best work in a climate of trust.

**JDG: How do we have more women participate in peace operations?**

**KL:** Right, the numbers are very poor. As I recall, the HIPPO report says things are looking much better than they were in 2007, but even so, in 2015 only 13 per cent of senior field appointments have been women. Somewhere I saw an argument about it being difficult to find women able to step into field posts – but the statistics on Headquarters appointments are no better.

Peace operations can be a challenging environment, both practically and politically. Not only for women, of course, but I've observed when interviewing as part of appointments panels that male candidates in general bring more reflection about their own past leadership roles and profiles. Forgive the generalization, but women will often say "We as an organization delivered …" or "I was part of a team that did X … ". Men are more prone, it seems to me, to identify their personal leadership experiences. As an SRSG one can't be too shy about one's personal leadership role. The job involves leading a lot of people. I encourage senior women in the UN to reflect and obtain feedback and encouragement on their qualities as leaders.

*Karin Landgren is a Non-Resident Fellow at the Center on International Cooperation at NYU, and former SRSG and Coordinator of United Nations Operations in Liberia | Twitter: @LandgrenKarin*

*Jim Della-Giacoma is the Deputy Director at the Center on International Cooperation at NYU, and Editor-in-Chief of the Global Peace Operations Review | Twitter: @jimdella*

# PEACELAND
## Conflict Resolution and the Everyday Politics of International Intervention



©SÉVERINE AUTESSERRE

## A MESSAGE FROM PEACELAND :

## CHANGE THE WAY UN PEACE OPERATIONS INTERACT WITH LOCAL ACTORS

Séverine Autesserre

### LOCAL PEOPLE SHOULD BE IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT, WITH INTERNATIONAL INTERVENERS ADVISING FROM THE BACK SEAT

*In her book* **Peaceland***, political scientist* **Séverine Autesserre** *(Barnard College, Columbia University) analyzes the everyday practices, narratives and habits of interveners in peace operations and how these often-unconscious factors influence and sometimes impair the effectiveness of international efforts. In this edited transcript of an interview with CIC Research Assistant Rahel Kroeker, Autesserre talks about Peaceland, its relation to the* **High-level Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) report***, and the ways in which UN peace operations can be improved in order to achieve sustainable peace.*

**Rahel Kroeker: What motivated you to write** *Peaceland***?**

**Séverine Autesserre:** *Peaceland* is based on my experiences as a humanitarian aid worker, a consultant to the UN and other peacebuilding organizations, and an academic researcher. My goal in the book was to understand why peace interventions so often

fail to reach their full potential. During my time working in conflict and post-conflict environments, I found that interveners often perpetuated behaviors and practices that were clearly ineffective or counterproductive. For instance, we know that expatriates shouldn't live in a bubble isolated from local populations, and yet when you look on the ground, interveners often do not interact enough with ordinary people. *Peaceland* tries to understand why these things happen, and why people who genuinely mean to do their best often perpetuate ineffective practices that harm the success of a peace operation.

My other main goal in *Peaceland* was to shine a spotlight on the peacebuilders who reject the dominant ways of thinking and working, because these exceptional individuals and organizations are much more effective at building peace.

**RK: How do you define peacebuilding, interveners, *Peaceland*, and measure the effectiveness of a peace operation?**

**SA:** Expanding on **Boutros Boutros-Ghali's definition**, **peacebuilding** means any and all actions that help promote peace during and after a conflict. It encompasses any kind of action that my interviewees said 'helped or were supposed to help bring peace'. This includes peacemaking, peacekeeping, traditional conflict-resolution programs, political and military efforts, certain development and humanitarian initiatives, as well as certain human rights projects. **Interveners** are the expatriates (the foreigners) who work in peacebuilding. *Peaceland* is a metaphor for the world of international peacebuilders – a world that has its own rituals, narratives, practices, habits, ways of working, and pecking order. I decide that something I study is **effective** when a large majority of people involved in it – both international interveners and local beneficiaries – see it as having promoted peace.

**RK: Some critics say you've lumped together too many types of interveners as "citizens" of *Peaceland*.**

SA: Of course there are enormous differences between the inhabitants of *Peaceland*, but we all know about these differences, while we often overlook the similarities. I remember once interviewing a provincial minister in Congo and he was constantly talking about the UNGOs as if [the UN and INGOs] are the same thing. Another time, I was talking informally with an ordinary citizen and he was telling me about 'this soldier who works for this NGO'. I told him no soldier is working for an NGO. These local people are very savvy and they know the difference between NGOs and the UN, but they were trying to communicate something else: there are similarities among the interveners in terms of habits and narratives. The acknowledgement of these similarities reveals many interesting insights.

**RK: *Peaceland* identifies a rift between intended beneficiaries and interveners of peacebuilding missions. You describe how the "construction of knowledge" and the politics of knowledge are one of the major explanations for this rift. Can you elaborate?**

**SA:** In the international peacebuilding system, thematic and technical expertise – how to do conflict resolution, intercultural reconciliation, organize elections, and promote gender equality – are valued much more than local knowledge. You see this in the way the management systems of INGOs, NGOs, diplomatic and donor missions work. People are almost always recruited on the basis of their technical and thematic expertise. The consequence is that the large majority of foreign peacebuilders I interviewed had little preexisting knowledge of their country of deployment. When trying to understand their place of deployment, most interveners end up relying on what I call "dominant narratives": stories that people tell about the conflict and that everybody believes. The dominant narrative on the **Democratic Republic of Congo**, for example, is that the main cause of violence is the illegal exploitation of mineral resources, the main consequence is sexual violence, and the central solution is reconstructing state

authority. In Darfur the dominant narrative is Arab versus African. In Timor-Leste it is East versus West. These dominant narratives are so simplistic that they overlook the myriad other causes of violence and lead to programs that are counterproductive and sometimes even fuel the violence.

**RK: What are some ways that the walls between interveners and local communities are built and maintained?**

**SA:** Foreign peacebuilders share the experience of being outsiders living and working in environments that are very unfamiliar and where they have no family. Very often they are afraid for their lives, they don't necessarily understand local languages, and they know that people may die if they make an error in their work. It's a high-stress job. This shared experience explains why, despite knowing it would be good for them to socialize with local people, they often just want to be with others who speak their own language and who can understand what they are going through. Foreign peacebuilders go to the same bars, the same restaurants, and they tend to have many more friends within the expatriate community than in the local communities. That's how we get an expatriate bubble.

Daily routines also reinforce these boundaries. Safety precautions such as living in a compound, for example, or having to drive with doors locked and windows closed can have the unintended effect of creating a further divide between interveners and local communities. Another important factor is the very goal with which foreigners arrive on the ground: 'We are here to help the population'. When you say you are 'here to help', you automatically put yourself on higher moral ground and construct an image of yourself as being superior to the local people. This divide and the constant emphasis on the eminence of interveners sours the relationships between peacebuilders and their local counterparts. As a result, local people frequently reject or evade the international initiatives designed to help them.

Of course, there are exceptions. There are expatriates who try to socialize with local people, who speak local languages, and who integrate into the local communities. And these people are much more effective in their daily peacebuilding work. But they are far fewer.

**RK: How can the imbalance of technical and local knowledge be addressed?**

**SA:** Rather than only recruiting people based on their technical and thematic expertise, we should also select employees based on their local expertise. Further, we can replace expatriate staff with local people in many administrative, logistical, and procurement positions. And at least some local employees should be recruited from the specific communities targeted by the peacebuilding project in question. Lastly, the current practice is that foreigners decide, and local people assist and advise; I think that should be reversed. Local people should be in the driver's seat, with international interveners advising from the back seat.

The **Eastern Congo Initiative [ECI]** has followed this kind of approach. ECI's first staff in Congo was an expatriate who spoke perfect Swahili, perfect French, and had been in Congo already for several years. For her first assignment, she was tasked with spending up to a year trying to hire a Congolese director and talking to local people about what would be ECI's best contribution to resolving the problems in Eastern Congo.

**RK: How can the boundaries between interveners and local counterparts be overcome?**

**SA:** We could encourage combined facilities where international interveners share office space with local organizations. I saw so many local organizations that were facing problems because their printer was broken or their phone line was cut and they didn't have money to fix these things. Sharing resources could help fix such problems and would also encourage socialization that, in turn, would facilitate breaking down boundaries.

Encouraging after-work socialization is also very important. Social and professional events are often only for the expatriates. They could be opened to local staff and partners, and specific events for networking could be organized. When hiring and promoting expatriate staff, we should consider their ability to connect with local communities and foster relationships as well as their knowledge of local languages and their understanding of local cultural codes. Because when interveners don't understand the local context and don't speak local languages, it's very difficult for them to interact socially with local people. But when they do speak the language and understand the cultural codes, then it's much easier for them to socialize after work and build productive relationships.

Local communities also have to meet international interveners halfway. I've heard of colleagues who, upon arriving in a community, had a kind of local mentor. Someone who said, 'Ok, I'm going to tell you how things work here and I'm going to tell you when you're making a cultural faux pas.' That's very helpful. You need these kinds of people because they help expatriates integrate into local communities.

**RK: There might be concerns that some of the solutions you propose are too time-consuming.**

**SA:** It would be time consuming, but not overly so. Yes, it would mean that interveners have to slow down. But, when we consult local people, they actually ask for international interveners to slow down. They say they're willing to bear the cost of that, that they would much prefer to have an intervention where people at least take some time to think about what they're going to do. The consequences of acting first and thinking afterwards are so damaging that it's often better to not act until we're sure that we are going to help the situation rather than make things worse. This idea builds on the work of the *Listening Program*, which I love and keep citing in my book.

**RK:** The High-level Panel on Peace Operations [HIPPO] report calls for more "field-focused" and "people-centered" missions, especially in its section on engaging with communities. How can this improve the relationship between interveners and local people?

**SA:** I love that HIPPO talks about the importance of understanding local dynamics through discussion with local people. That's the central point of my first book, *The Trouble with the Congo*. The report says that local conflicts matter and we need to understand local dynamics in addition to national and international dynamics. And if we want to understand that, we need to talk to local people and engage them beyond the small elite of local individuals who speak French or English. The report emphasizes that we need to work more in partnership with local people and include them in the design and planning of peace efforts. We need to pay more attention to local cultural and linguistic cues and country expertise, and support more local conflict resolution initiatives – again a huge point of my first book. We need to add some downward accountability mechanisms and not ignore local capacities for peace. All of these are definitely steps in the right direction.

To me what really matters is how these recommendations will be implemented and interpreted on the ground. Unfortunately, the report itself has just five paragraphs on "Engaging Communities". I am aware of the constraints that the authors were facing, but I would have wanted much more emphasis on community engagement. At the same time, we don't need a high-level panel to tell people to go have a drink with their local counterparts after work. Change can come from the top and the bottom. This report is a way to drive change from the top, but every international peacebuilder on the ground can make change happen from the bottom as well. It's a daily choice and a daily responsibility for them to decide: Do I want to be a Peacelander, or do I actually want to be one of the exceptions that make things better?

**RK: Can the mindset change proposed by the HIPPO report impact how other organizations work on the ground?**

SA: The panel's report is for UN missions, but I stress in the book that UN peacekeeping missions are just some of the many organizations that employ these problematic everyday practices, habits, and narratives. Other UN agencies do this as well, as does the whole aid community: NGOs, donors and diplomats. We would need a high-level report for every single one of them, and have change coming from the bottom for each of them as well. But recommendations like those found in HIPPO can certainly motivate change across all actors in *Peaceland*.

**RK: HIPPO is dedicated to "Nyakhat and Others" – Nyakhat being a little girl in South Sudan who sought the help of UNMISS for her blind father by walking "four hours through harsh and dangerous terrain". The report begins with her story and ends with a paragraph on Nyakhat's hopes and expectations for the UN to bring peace. Does this framing reinforce the paradigm of the "here to help" narrative and the inequality of power relations between host populations and interveners?**

**SA:** I always tell my students to start with a story – I do get that. I think the broader point with this kind of framing is that it really depends on what you do with the story. Is the story 'Oh let's all come and help Nyakhat'? If so, then yes, it reinforces the 'Ethics of Care' and it reinforces paternalistic discourses. But if the story is rather 'Let's all do everything we can so that Nyakhat (when she grows up) can help herself and her country, and be in the driver's seat,' if we are saying that she can build peace in her community and we're going to come in support of her, then that's a completely different story.

And I sincerely hope that my *Peaceland* book will not only help change the way these issues are framed, but also encourage more equitable power relations between host populations and interveners on the ground.

*Severine Autesserre is an Associate Professor of Political Science, specializing in international relations and African studies, at Barnard College, Columbia University (USA). She works on civil wars, peacebuilding, peacekeeping, humanitarian aid, and African politics. |* **Twitter: @severinear**

*Rahel Kroeker was a research assistant at the Center on International Cooperation at NYU |* **Twitter: @rahel_melody**
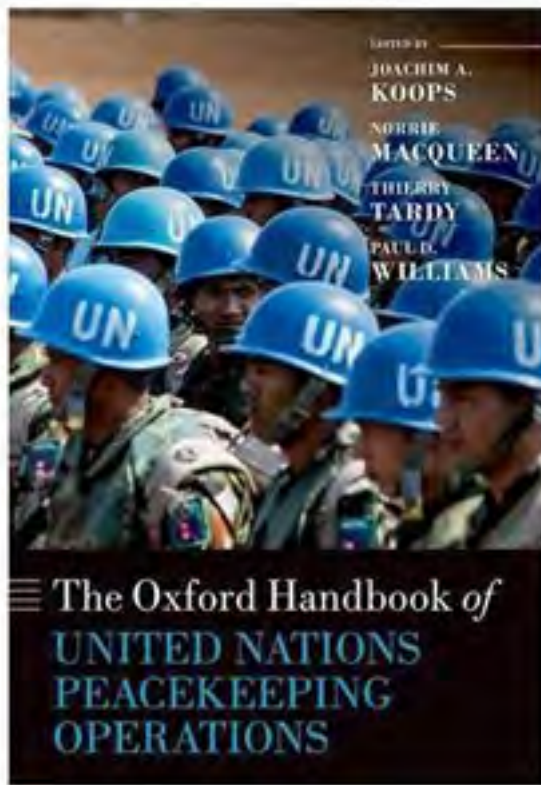
© OXFORD

# OXFORD HANDBOOK TELLS THE HISTORY OF UN PEACEKEEPING'S SUCCESSES AND FAILURES

Joachim Koops and Paul D. Williams

## THE CENTRAL MESSAGE OF THE HANDBOOK IS THAT PEACEKEEPING IS MUCH MORE SUCCESSFUL THAN WE ALL ASSUME

*The **Oxford Handbook of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (2015)** provides in-depth analysis of all UN peacekeeping operations since 1948 until 2013 as well as thematic chapters on UN and non-UN peacekeeping trends and developments. The following is an edited transcript of an interview by **Alexandra Novosseloff** (CIC Senior Visiting Fellow) with two of the four editors: **Joachim Koops and Paul D. Williams**. Their conversation about the Handbook and peacekeeping is a contribution to an ongoing debate about current UN and non-UN peacekeeping operations concerning the recommendations of the **High-level Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO)** report for improving the effectiveness and outcomes of peacekeeping and peace operations in general.*

**Alexandra Novosseloff: You have just published a major work of historical and contemporary research:** *The Oxford Handbook of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations* **(2015). How did this book come into being?**

**Joachim Koops:** I think we've all thought about the gap in the peacekeeping literature and the selection bias for some time. We felt a handbook could perhaps provide a good basis for a more comprehensive and nuanced debate on peacekeeping's successes and limitations. I remember when, as an undergraduate working on my first term paper on peacekeeping, there was no single book that dealt with all UN operations. So after my PhD, it was always something I wanted to do. A concrete opportunity arose more than four years ago when Thierry Tardy and I got together for a workshop in Geneva and decided to give it a try. However, we realized that such an endeavor would be impossible without Paul and Norrie [MacQueen]. We were extremely fortunate to have had such a great editorial team and an extremely knowledgeable group of more than 50 contributors, all of whom got together to dig deeply into every single UN peacekeeping operation launched between 1948 and 2013. We tried to apply more or less the same framework for each chapter in order to allow the reader to compare the successes, failures, and other aspects over the course of each operation, systematically, across more than six decades of peacekeeping. The framework includes a brief historical background to each conflict the UN sought to address with the mission in question; the mission's mandate; what the mission set out to do and how it changed; a quick overview on how the mission unfolded; and finally, the mission's achievements and to what extent there were lessons to be learnt for the wider body of knowledge on peacekeeping operations.

**Paul Williams:**  We also decided on the addition of a few thematic chapters. We believed it was important to not only have the history of peacekeeping as the story of the individual missions, but also to look at some of the key themes that link many of them. So we have chapters on trends in peacekeeping operations, international law, inter-organizational relations in peacekeeping, and the distinction between peace operations and humanitarian interventions. One chapter also discusses the question of success vs. failure. Inevitably, particularly when politicians or the broader public discuss peacekeeping, missions are very quickly going to be judged as either successes or failures. Hence we also included a chapter on the complexities and challenges of evaluating missions. And then we added the editors' introductions, because even though we don't all agree with the idea that there are distinct chronological generations of missions, we still wanted to make it clear that peacekeeping missions take place in a particular historical context and follow a particular historical debate.

**JK:** We deliberately wanted to have a chronological story told with each mission in succeeding chapters to allow readers to draw their own conclusions about recurring themes, successes and failures. Also, which lessons learned from previous missions were implemented – or, failing that, which missions seemed to have merely repeatedly reinvented the wheel. There was a big debate among all four co-editors whether we should provide one definite definition of success and failure for all authors to follow, or whether we should allow contributors to follow their own views on success and failure. In the end we opted for plurality, since anyone who has dealt with the challenge of evaluating peacekeeping knows how nuanced – and controversial – any debate on evaluating success or failure turns out. Hence we asked *Paul Diehl and Dan Druckman*, who wrote an excellent book on the difficulties of evaluating peace operations, to write a chapter on this for our thematic parts of the handbook. We then let the mission contributors more or less decide for themselves how they would determine and judge the success or failure of a mission.

**AN: At the end of these four years, what is your own evaluation of where UN peacekeeping stands today? What are some of the main accomplishments, achievements and challenges for the years ahead?**

**PW:** A few things stand out. Number one: roughly seventy years after the UN invented peacekeeping, it's still around. So the first question to ask is what are the reasons that explain the durability of UN peacekeeping as an institution? There is often no real better alternative when it comes to international forms of conflict management, despite all the changes we've seen in the global governance arena and debates about UN reform.

The second conclusion for me is that often the United Nations has to deal with some of the most challenging and protracted conflicts on the planet – both in a geostrategic and a local political sense. So in one sense it is remarkable that there is actually any good news to report about UN peacekeeping. We need to keep context in mind. The tendency for the UN to have to deal with crises that nobody else wants to own means there's a sort of selection bias: by definition, wherever a UN peacekeeping mission ends up being deployed, it's probably because other alternatives are judged to not really be feasible or legitimate. Or, no one wants to expend the resources themselves to solve the problems.

A third conclusion is that there has never been a bigger need for UN peacekeepers. Over a 70-year period we're currently at record numbers of peacekeepers. So it is a good time to conduct a deeper analysis of lessons learnt from the past.

That leads to my fourth overall conclusion: we have got to remember that peacekeeping operations are just instruments. They're not political strategies of conflict resolution. A continual theme that emerges is that political success really revolves around having a strategy for reconciliation and conflict resolution between the belligerent factions. Peacekeeping operations can be an important part of that political strategy, but they're never synonymous with it and should never be a substitute for it. So I think that the failures we've seen in UN missions are usually quite predictable, and have tended to follow occasions when we've deployed missions in the absence of a clear political strategy. One of the starkest examples from the Handbook is the mission in Syria: four months in duration, trying to monitor a nonexistent ceasefire with belligerents that aren't committed to really working towards a peace in a genuine sense. Finally, UN peacekeeping is a reflection of the story of international politics more broadly – it's a story about why geopolitics has unfolded in the way it did.

**JK:** Picking up on that, look at the history of peacekeeping in terms of what it can tell us about the global history of conflicts. Since the beginning of peacekeeping in 1948, which emerged with the still-unresolved Palestine-Israel conflict, you can see that every major explosion of conflicts across the globe was always at some point followed by a blue helmet peacekeeping operation. So in many ways the history of UN Peacekeeping – the deployments in the Middle East and Kashmir in the 1950s; Cyprus and Congo in the 1960s; Central America, Central Asia, the Balkans and particularly Africa since the 1990s – is also the history of major and often intractable conflicts. Peacekeeping was used particularly during the Cold War as a tool by the major world powers to insulate regional crises from spreading to the (nuclear) global level, but it was also employed in complex conflicts and regional crises that remain unresolved to the present day. Thus, UN peacekeeping operations in Kashmir, Cyprus, the Middle East or Congo still remain in place where all other political efforts continue to fail.

Another interesting result emerging from our study of the entire history of almost 70 UN peacekeeping operations is that nothing in contemporary peacekeeping is truly 'new'. In fact, many things that we now think are novel in the 21st Century already have been tried in the 1960s and 1970s. The Handbook shows that in Cyprus, for example, there was an attempt to create a safe area around the Nicosia airport – something that was later picked up in Bosnia with the tragic outcome that resulted. We also have currently a strong debate about the use of force in UN Peacekeeping missions that go beyond the narrow idea of 'using force in self-defense'. Again, however, it was already in the context of the Cyprus operation in 1964 when [former UN Secretary-General] U Thant first formulated guidelines for peacekeepers on when force could be used not just for defending peacekeeping troops, but also to defend the mandate. The idea of temporary administrations – i.e. the UN being directly responsible for the territorial administration of a country – which was applied in its most challenging version in Cambodia in the early 1990s, as well as Kosovo and East Timor a decade later, had already been tried by the UN Temporary Executive Authority/UN Security Force in West Guinea

in 1962. Similarly, this force also foreshadowed the importance of policing tasks, something that would become an ever more important part of UN Peacekeeping in the post-Cold War era. Finally, the much-debated relationship between the UN and regional organizations first manifested itself in a tiny mission in the early 1960s in the Dominican Republic, wherein a small operation tried to keep the US-led Organization of American States mission in check.

So, in the Handbook we try to show that many issues that are discussed now, and seem new, have already been tested in various ways and there are important lessons to be learnt from them.

The central message of the Handbook is that peacekeeping is much more successful than we all assume or talk about in current debates. Also, while it might not be a particularly new conclusion, we also show in the Handbook that the most successful operations were those where major powers backed it, had a regional strategy, and worked together regionally despite their differences to solve that conflict. In these cases peacekeeping, particularly when combined with a high level of flexibility on part of the troop contributing countries and UN senior leadership to react to changing situations on the ground, was very successful.

Let's take for example the operation in Tajikistan, with its rather violent and regionally problematic civil war in the mid-1990s. A terrible conflict, with an estimated 50,000 killed and up to 1.2 million civilians displaced. In current peacekeeping literature, it remains a rather obscure case study. Yet it was highly successful, at least in terms of security stabilization. You had Iran, Russia, and the West, as well as a variety of regional organizations, working together for one strategic purpose. You had a contact group that politically put pressure on the different warring parties and worked rather effectively together. UNMOT, the UN's blue helmet operation, adapted from its beginnings as an observer mission to a DDR [Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration] mission and then phased into peacebuilding. So for us, the advantage of having a handbook that focuses also on 'lesser-known' operations is clear: it provides the reader with the full picture and full spectrum of failures, but also the successes of UN Peacekeeping throughout history.

**AN: The book was finished before the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO) report was released. In relation to what you have written in the Handbook, what struck you about the HIPPO recommendations and its major conclusions?**

PW: From our research I would strongly recognize and endorse a few key themes that also came up in the HIPPO. Number one, what they call the primacy of politics; I completely endorse that. It comes through very clearly that in the absence of an effective political strategy, peacekeeping missions can at best do something called damage limitation. They can limit the worst symptoms of violent conflict but they can't resolve its underlying causes.

A second thing that stands out to my mind, although it wasn't a major focus of the Handbook, is the importance of designing a bureaucracy that can help deliver the political tasks that peacekeeping operations are being mandated to deliver in the field. Part of the story we tell in the Handbook is the growing professionalization of UN peacekeeping. A little-known fact for people who don't engage extensively in peacekeeping research is that there wasn't even a Department of Peacekeeping Operations at the UN until 1992. A good point of reflection from the HIPPO is that bureaucratic systems need to be designed to deliver the political tasks in the mandate. This means being sensitive to what peacekeepers in the field conclude, rather than developing all the key decisions in New York.

A third point would be regarding the mandates themselves. We organized the Handbook to make clear what specific mandates were given to each mission. I would tend to agree with the HIPPO report's conclusion that if mandates are simply long lists of tasks – and they have become increasingly long lists of tasks – then this is not a very helpful way of defining effective strategies. What we need is some element of prioritization. We need a way of thinking about the allocation of resources to particular tasks, and also we need to think about the relationship between lots of different mandated tasks operating simultaneously. In the Handbook it becomes clear that the most effective missions were those with senior political leadership that could draw connections concerning the various aspects of the mandate. These missions were able to prioritize what was most important, because they were able to see connections between different types of mandated tasks and allocate their limited resources around them.

Finally, concerning the HIPPO, I would strongly agree with the emphasis on partnerships, questions about the reasons for peace operations, and who the real beneficiaries should be. I think we get lost if we see this as a story about New York or other bureaucratic centers. We have to remember that the primary purpose has to be dealing with the local effects of armed conflict on the ground, and that the ultimate goal should be to improve the situation of the people on the receiving end. So it's the 'peace kept', or the local populations that peacekeepers work with, that should be our top priority. To my mind that's something the UN still hasn't got right and needs to think much more about. **How do we best engage with local populations to deliver results on the ground?** And how, really, can we design tasks and mission mandates that work with good ways of engaging a local population rather than against them?

**JK:** We were very honored and pleased that the HIPPO panel actually requested and used some of the handbook's chapters during their regional consultations, and we sincerely appreciated the exchanges with some of the panel members. I think overall we have to be very honest and frank about what peacekeeping can and cannot do, and whether we maybe want to dampen expectations of what blue helmets can achieve even if it contradicts our own wishes or impulses. Of course we would like to see blue helmets protect civilians from threat in every single situation. But I think it's important to have a more honest debate about the limits of the Protection of Civilians (POC) mandates, especially given some historical examples and contemporary challenges.

Second point concerning the HIPPO: partnerships. Partnerships between the UN and regional or other organizations have increased in terms of numbers, intensity and institutionalization. We have between the UN and the EU, for example, one of the most densely institutionalized relationships that exist between two autonomous organizations, with action plans, steering committees and also activity on the ground. Similarly, the UN has advanced significant cooperation schemes with the African Union and even NATO or the CSTO. But the interesting point here again that is often missed is that sometimes it's not a partnership but two entities with diametrically opposed interests. And that's something also to be aware of when we talk about coordination, and the problems of collaboration between the UN and international organizations. So perhaps we have to be a little bit more careful when we use the term 'partnerships' when describing the wide range of complicated inter-organizational relations.

Finally, I read with great interest that the HIPPO report also talks about the failures in having some kind of standing capacity, a nucleus element, some kind of start-up capability ready to deploy rapidly for peacekeeping operations. If you look at any peacekeeping operation that was assembled under time pressure and the resulting slow trickling in of troop contributing countries – as has been the case in the majority of all UN operations – it becomes clear how speedy deployments can make or break an operation. Yet, again, what is often forgotten in these contemporary debates is that during the last 70 years we've already had 14 multilateral attempts to establish a rapid reaction force for the UN. And as the Handbook chapter on the **UN Mission in**

**Ethiopia and Eritrea [UNMEE]** shows, there has been one successful example of trying to come close to the idea of a 'UN army', if not standing, then at least on standby: the Standby High Readiness Brigade for UN Operations (SHIRBRIG), which contributed to the planning and deployment of UNMEE in 2000. Indeed, the co-author of the UNMEE chapter, Patrick Cammaert, used to be SHIRBRIG's Commander and later became an avid supporter of enhancing and expanding the brigade as an effective rapid reaction force. Unfortunately, for a variety of understandable and not so understandable reasons, SHIRBRIG was dismantled in 2009. The fact that the HIPPO report now talks once more about the need for a rapid reaction force highlights the ongoing importance of connecting historical dots, and the need for improving existing instruments, rather than dismantling them too quickly. SHIRBRIG could not only have been a useful rapid reaction tool, but it was also used as a 'rapidly deployable headquarters' in the Liberia mission (UNMIL) in 2003 and conducted pre-mission planning for the Sudan and Ivory Coast operations. As the current situation and the HIPPO report make clear, future challenges to UN Peacekeeping will require even more strong planning capacities and robust, cohesive and well-trained rapid reaction forces.

**AN: Our conversation has pointed out major challenges and necessities for improving peacekeeping, but also the successes and potential of peacekeeping missions. Where does this leave us?**

**PW:** One of the things that stands out quite clearly concerning global military expenditure is how few financial resources have really been devoted to the world of UN peacekeeping and other forms of conflict management. We spend a pittance on giving peace a chance, and huge sums on preparing for war.

**JK:** An exercise that really puts the underfunding of UN peacekeeping in perspective is to remind ourselves of what other countries spend in total on conflicts that are in their direct strategic interest. For example, on Afghanistan alone the U.S. used to spend 3.5 billion dollars per month. That's half of the entire annual UN Peacekeeping budget spent in a single month, by one UN member, on one single country.

**AN: For Afghanistan, at the height of the mission, the U.S. expenditure was the equivalent of the UN peacekeeping budget.**

PW: And yet, despite the relative lack of positive resources, UN peacekeepers have still been able to deliver. The various chapters in the Handbook highlight many impressive results and achievements despite relatively constrained and limited resources that have been spent on UN peacekeeping. Concerning the rise in peacekeeping budgets over the last few years, it is important to note that expenditures have risen in large part because of the locations where we've been deploying peacekeepers and the difficulty of getting supplies delivered in areas where there are no good roads, no good airports, etc. If UN peacekeeping had historically been deployed only in places like Cyprus, we would have had a much smaller budget. But when the history of peacekeeping includes deployments in Congo, Western Sudan, Northern Mali, etc., then I think that's important to remember.

**JK:** A final remark: The UN has over the last 67 years deployed 71 missions around the globe, In other words, more than one mission per year, addressing the most intractable conflicts around the world. And it had to do so despite a variety of political, structural and resource constraints. Now imagine what peacekeeping could achieve if it was given all the resources it would need – which would still be far less than the resources deployed by coalitions of willing or unilateral state-led missions. The success of UN peacekeeping would probably shock us all.
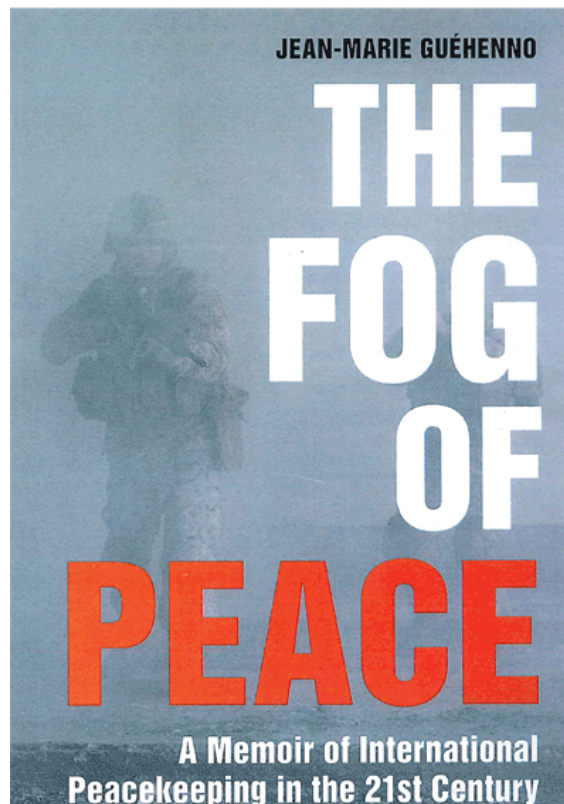
*Alexandra Novosseloff* is Senior Visiting Fellow at the **Center on International Cooperation at NYU**. | ***Twitter: @DeSachenka***

*Joachim A. Koops* is Dean of Vesalius College, Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB), Research Professor at the VUB's Institute for European Studies and Director of the Global Governance Institute (GGI). | ***Twitter: @JoeKoops***

*Paul D. Williams* is associate professor in the Elliott School of International Affairs at the George Washington University. | ***Twitter:*** @ **PDWilliamsGWU**

*Norrie MacQueen* is an Honorary Research Fellow, School of International Relations, University of St Andrews. | ***Twitter: @NorrieMacQueen***

*Thierry Tardy* is a Senior Analyst at the European Union Institute for Security Studies. | ***Twitter: @thierrytardy***

JEAN-MARIE GUÉHENNO

THE FOG OF PEACE

A Memoir of International Peacekeeping in the 21st Century

©BROOKINGS

## FOG OF PEACE:

## UN PEACEKEEPING NEEDS TO FOCUS MORE ON POLITICAL STRATEGY AND LESS ON TROOPS

Jean-Marie Guéhenno

### WHEN IT COMES TO HELPING A COUNTRY IN CRISIS THERE ARE SEVERAL TOOLS, THE MOST IMPORTANT ONE BEING THE MOST IMMATERIAL: THE POLITICAL ONE

*Distinguished former Under Secretary-General of Peacekeeping Operations Jean-Marie Guéhenno shares his insight on the current state of UN peacekeeping in an interview with CIC Senior Visiting Fellow Alexandra Novosseloff. Referring to analysis in his recent book* **The Fog of Peace: A Memoir of International Peacekeeping in the 21st Century**, *Guéhenno talks about the role of the P5 in peacekeeping, the challenge of adequate mandates, and necessary reforms in UN Peace Operations efforts that the next Secretary-General needs to address. The following is an edited transcript of the interview.*

**Alexandra Novosseloff: The Fog of Peace looks in particular at lessons learnt in peacekeeping. From your perspective of vast in-depth knowledge, first-hand involvement and experience with peacekeeping, is it fair to say that the real problem of peacekeeping is that it too often lacks "a focused political strategy" and "clarity on the degree of the support of the international community", as you state in the book?**

**Jean-Marie Guéhenno:** Yes. A key lesson for me in my years of running peacekeeping operations is that the Security Council and the member states focus on the hardware of troops, because that's easily visible. However, they don't focus enough on the politics underpinning the whole effort, because that's much more controversial and politically sensitive. The members of the Security Council have a hard time agreeing in substance on a political strategy. I think that this can be overcome if the UN Secretariat, if the UN officials themselves, think through a political strategy. Provided that political strategy does not contradict the direct interests of one of the key members of the Security Council, the UN actually has quite a bit of leeway if it is creative and imaginative. But it is not always creative and imaginative, and so it does not always use the space it has. When you are creative, you take risks. If you take a risk and are successful, the Security Council will be happy with it and will take credit for it. But if it does not work, you will be very lonely. The resulting safe bureaucratic attitude is not to take too much initiative or risk, and therefore not to have a genuinely ambitious political strategy. Hence this focus on troops, on the hardware, on the military means to an end, and not much thinking on all the other tools or about the real political end that should be achieved.

**AN: Another aspect is the fact that the mandates are maybe too ambitious. How do you balance these ambitions with the reality of UN capacities as a whole?**

**JMG:** The mandates are not just too ambitious, they are also too broad and lacking in focus. In the Security Council negotiations leading up to writing the resolution that will define the mandate, everybody has his or her own 'nice' idea. So, very often, the mandate looks like a kind of Christmas tree with lots of laudable goals but no sense of priority. Since priority would again require asking some hard questions, and then answering them, that is where it gets difficult.

Another element is that the process of writing a mandate and then deploying a mission is flawed. In the **Brahimi Report** a two-step approach was suggested. And the latest **High-level Panel on Peacekeeping [HIPPO]** report advocates a staged approach to mandates. Both reports identify a key issue: producing a mandate should be a much more iterative process, because the Secretariat has to be the bridge between the Security Council – which has political authority – and the troop contributing countries [TCCs] that will provide the muscle. The various interests have to be reconciled. Currently it does not happen that way. The result is that the Security Council defines a very broad, unfocused, overambitious goal and then it says to the Secretariat, 'over to you'. The real process should be for the Secretariat to discuss with all the stakeholders and agree on a mandate that is backed not just by the Security Council but also by those who will have the difficult task of implementation.

**AN: How would a strengthened and more constructive triangular cooperation between the Secretariat, the Security Council and those troop contributing countries look? We've seen for example TCC meetings convened by the Secretariat that are not an appropriate venue for TCCs in particular to convey their concerns.**

**JMG:** Well, to be invited to such a meeting you only have to contribute one officer to be considered a TCC. So you then have one country contributing maybe several battalions or a key component of the mission sitting next to a country that is just there to be informed about what's going on. Hence there is no sense of shared responsibility. I do think that there needs to be meetings where

you really sit around the table with the key actors or potential actors of a mission to discuss the operation. But a meeting in itself is just a meeting. The crucial question is whether that meeting will have consequences.

There are several issues with how you shape the military leg, so to speak, of an overall strategy. Yet again, the strategy cannot be just the military leg. The military strategy is only one component of an overall political strategy wherein military force can provide some leverage. The military strategy is important, and I would be the last one to underestimate that. But it's only part of something broader – it is just one of the levers you have. Now there are several factors alluded to in your question. First, what capacity will be available? And capacity here means a combination of forces made available to the UN along with the willingness to use those forces in a certain way. There are many shortcomings with respect to this. You see for instance the Security Council authorizing a mission with 10,000 troops and one year later there are little more than half of those troops deployed on the ground. That is not right. When the Secretariat sees that it is not going to be able to recruit within a certain period of time at least half of what the Security Council has authorized, there should be a process to engage the Security Council and review those goals.  You cannot achieve the mandate with 60% of the force that was planned. It is not credible.

You need to have a working equation between the numbers and the required tasks. It is a question of how many troops the Secretariat can recruit. What operations are the recruited troops willing and able to conduct? There must be a sufficiently detailed and frank discussion for the Secretariat to have a very clear idea of this. Writing a mandate should be an evolving process, an interaction between the Secretariat and the Security Council, and the final operational mandate should integrate all of it. The Secretariat needs to be in a position to say concerning a particular mandate, "we would have loved to do this and that, but frankly we don't have the numbers, we don't have the capacities, we don't have the willingness among our troop contributors, so this is what we can do." The ball is squarely also in the camp of the Security Council. It is too easy for the Security Council to turn to the Secretariat and assume there is some miraculous army that can be put together with no responsibility on their part.

Numbers are not the whole story though. Behind the numbers there has to be willingness, tied to an effective capacity. And that's where we need discussion on the concept of the operation of a peacekeeping mission. Are the troops that are going to be deployed prepared to do x, or not? And not in generic terms - but concerning concrete scenarios. Are we for example prepared to deploy mobile operating bases? Are we going to complain if after six months they are not in fixed accommodations? There has to be a clear understanding of the expectations of the troops. And here I think in terms of the planning phase of the mission. I don't think that the NATO model is necessarily the ideal, where the mission is entirely the property so to speak of the troops and the countries that are contributing them. Concerning the UN model, there is some merit to benefiting from lessons learnt, and from the experience of other missions. There is also an advantage in not making the mission the sole hostage of the troop contributing countries. A more integrated, broader perspective is what the UN is all about as a universal organization. However, I think that in the planning phase and then in the execution, officers of the main contributing countries should be involved so that they feel comfortable with the way the mission is planned and then executed. That is not a bad thing. It is all a question of balance.

The United Nations has immense institutional knowledge. It does not always do a superb job because it lacks resources. But it certainly knows a lot about stabilizing operations, and it knows more about peacekeeping than most countries individually, including countries that think of themselves as vastly superior militarily and that have much greater military capacity. That does not mean that they understand everything about peacekeeping. Sometimes there is a little bit of arrogance here.

**AN: Do you think the Obama Summit will impact those current challenges concerning the lack of a sufficient number of deployable troops? And will it provide the Secretariat more options in selecting the TCCs needed in a peacekeeping operation?**

**JMG:** The United States contributes officers and police, but it is not contributing troops to the United Nations. If it did, that might actually create problems because of the geopolitical weight of the country. At the same time, the U.S. is the UN's number one financial contributor. That situation puts the U.S. in a delicate position with regard to peacekeeping. If it calls on other countries to contribute more troops, it can be accused of asking others to do what it does not do. But the fact that President Obama at the UN and in a **memo** to his administration has detailed all the things that the U.S. is willing to do for the UN sends a very good political signal. And in the end, the political support the United States gives to the United Nations is even more important than the material support.

This excellent U.S. initiative is not going to end the debate on the risks that peacekeepers should take. Troop contributors would like the countries – among them the U.S. – that ask them to take more risks, to also carry part of that burden. This is a legitimate political request, and the fact that the U.S. may provide more indirect support in terms of training, logistics, etc. is a partial answer, as would be more direct operational support in difficult environments. The **Obama Peacekeeping Summit** will ideally begin to address more directly and more transparently this issue of the triangular interaction between the Security Council, the troop contributing countries and the Secretariat. It will remain a problem if the P5 are not prepared to provide the backbone of peacekeeping in terms of military capacities.

This was actually the idea of the UN charter in 1945, and it was completely turned around during the Suez crisis because France and the UK were parties to the conflict. And so the great invention of Dag Hammarskjöld and Lester Pearson was to bring in troops that would be anything but the P5. For a very long time afterward, peacekeeping was anything but the P5. But some of the P5 came back during the Yugoslav war: Britain and France. Russia is involved in peacekeeping now, as is China. So now you do have the P5 in limited numbers but not totally insignificant. We are therefore presently in a situation that is neither the vision of the charter of 1945 nor the vision of the founders of peacekeeping in 1956. We have now a sort of mixed situation, in a context where it is also much riskier to be a peacekeeper today than it was 30 years ago. Because of this, we need to find intelligent ways to involve troop contributing countries more. And the P5 must open up to the troop contributing countries.

**AN: In your book you talk about the relationship between the host countries and the various parties to the conflict. What are your conclusions?**

**JMG:** Peacekeeping missions are generally deployed on the basis of the host country's consent. But that consent needs to be managed, and sometimes it is essentially not really there. In these cases, the UN is effectively begging the host country to accept to be helped. That was the case in Sudan, in Darfur. This is not a good position to be in because the UN should never be in a position of "demandeur" when it comes to actually putting its people, its troops, at risk. I strongly believe that when you deploy troops in a country, that country is not doing you a favor – you are doing a favor for that country. You are spending blood and treasure to help. If the leadership of that country does not want you to help – and peacekeeping in itself is difficult enough – then it is going to become an almost impossible situation. So I think in many situations we see that the golden hour for the peacekeeping operation

is at the beginning, when the state structures have collapsed. Then the UN – even if it does not have a mandate to run the country, as was the case when Timor became independent – is in a strong position to shape things and can help if it does so intelligently and with a clear political strategy.

**AN: If you had to pick one or two major reforms that the next Secretary-General [SG] should undertake, what would those be?**

**JMG:** I think the existing structures of the UN, with a Department of Political Affairs and a Department of Peacekeeping, are not completely adequate. Yet I do not think there is an ideal organigram. Each has its downside. So, I will not suggest that there is 'the' organigram that will fix the problems of the UN. But I think that the next SG certainly will have to think about how to better manage the crucial connections that exist between politics, peacekeeping and development.

When it comes to helping a country in crisis there are several tools, the most important one being the most immaterial: the political one. How are you going to enlist the support of a particular region or at least make sure that the divisions within that region are not going to make things worse? Political strategy really has to be the umbrella, the compass, of a mission. It is the key element.

Then you have different tools - but they are only tools. You have the possibility of deploying troops; you have what may be done in terms of support to governance and humanitarian challenges, because there can be a major humanitarian crisis that will also have political implications that require development tools. All of this needs to be orchestrated much better in a much greater continuum. The notion of distinct categories of peace enforcement, peacekeeping and peacebuilding is just theory. It is not reality. When and to what extent to deploy troops has to be decided on the merits of the case, and each situation has its unique characteristics. The UN is not really configured to have this kind of broad approach in terms of how it plans its actions, or to really think of all the tools it has in its toolbox and use them in a seamless manner. I think this is a reform to which much thought should be given. The traditional categories of peacekeeping and political missions do not make sense any more. The separation between the peacekeeping budget and the fact that political missions cannot be funded through peacekeeping is not useful. One should be much more flexible on that. If the international community invests in engagement in countries, it has to have the means to do it. So that is one structural issue where greater flexibility and fluidity should be built into the UN systems.

Another key issue is that the Secretary-General of the United Nations needs to have much more flexibility with an available team of highly experienced political operators that he can consult and deploy quickly. The UN needs more seasoned leaders like UN Envoy Sergio Vieira de Mello, whom we lost in Bagdad, or like Lakhdar Brahimi, who can be deployed rapidly in times of crisis. I think the way the UN currently scrambles to find the right envoy or SRSG in acute crisis situations leads to uneven results. There has to be much greater thought given to how you assemble a flexible pool of people that can help the Secretary-General deal with a world that is increasingly complicated.

*Jean-Marie Guéhenno is president of the International Crisis Group and non-resident Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution and the Center on International Cooperation at NYU. From 2000 until 2008 he was Under Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.* | ***Twitter***: ***@JGuehenno***

*Alexandra Novosseloff is Senior Visiting Fellow at the Center on International Cooperation at NYU.* | ***Twitter: @DeSachenka***

©TAMRAT SAMUEL

# "GOOD OFFICES" MEANS TAKING RISKS

Tamrat Samuel

## YOU CAN'T EXPECT US TO BE OF ANY HELP IF WE CAN'T SPEAK TO EVERYONE INVOLVED. YOU MAY TREAT THEM AS TERRORISTS BUT IF YOU WANT PEACE, YOU ARE GOING TO HAVE TO BRING THOSE PEOPLE ON BOARD

*Tamrat Samuel recently stepped down from his post as Deputy SRSG (Rule of Law) for the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), but before taking part in this peacekeeping mission he had an extensive career with the UN Department of Political Affairs (DPA), including as Director of the Asia and Pacific Division, playing an integral role in peace processes in East Timor and Nepal, where he was also a DSRSG in the UN Mission in Nepal (UNMIN). While in the Asia Pacific Division at DPA he played an active part, on a number of occasions and over many years, in carrying out the Secretary-General's "good offices". In a recent interview with **Jim Della-Giacoma** he talked about this special brand of diplomacy.*

**JDG: The concept "good offices" is not defined in the UN Charter. As a practitioner of this special kind of diplomacy, what does the term mean to you?**

Good offices is a very broad term for any third party assistance given to conflicting parties to help find a solution to their problems. This can take many different forms. For example, it may include, but is not necessarily limited to, mediation. The role could involve advising parties to a conflict or governments, carrying messages between opposing sides, or facilitating contact between groups without necessarily directly injecting oneself into the process. Also, providing specialized expertise to discussions and generally being a catalyst. In essence, you have a range of choices within the broad concept of a good officer.

**JDG: What does it mean when the Secretary-General is exercising his "good offices"?**

TS: The use of the Secretary-General's good offices carries the prestige and credibility of his office and person as well as the weight of international public opinion that he and the organization embody. This could take two forms. First, the good offices tasks he undertakes on the basis of a mandate he is given by the Security Council or the General Assembly. However, he also has an inherent independent role, and even responsibility, by virtue of being the Secretary-General, to lend his good offices to any country or member state. Hammarskjold's innovative "Peking Formula" established this in the mid-1950s. I think it is very important to understand that distinction. Sometimes it is critical, because there is a misperception that the Secretary-General's involvement in any kind of third party role entails involvement of the Security Council, which can frighten parties.

**JDG: You played the good offices role in then East Timor (now Timor-Leste) and also in Nepal. How did it differ in each place?**

**TS:** In Timor, I supported the good offices of then-Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, which he personally led. The responsibility was then delegated to his Senior Advisors – initially Alvaro de Soto, subsequently Ismat Kittani and briefly Yasushi Akashi – with DPA largely managing the process on a daily basis, specifically then Asia Pacific Director Francesc Vendrell and myself as the desk officer. It entailed more than just the bureaucratic process of preparing for various rounds of talks between Indonesia (the Occupying Power) and Portugal (the legal Administering Power) under the Secretary-General's auspices. It meant immersing yourself into the issues, knowing the parties, talking to all sides, exploring possibilities. In the early 1990s, Timor was hardly on anybody's radar (save for the attention the 1991 Santa Cruz massacre generated) and was written off by many as a "lost case". Many argued at that time that the best possible solution for the Timorese would be to accept integration under the Suharto regime, hopefully with some degree of autonomy and improved human rights conditions. My role was to speak to Timorese on all sides and also engage Indonesia at different levels, as well as Portugal and other interested states that were following the situation either in the [UN Security] Council or outside the Council.

**JDG: How did this begin?**

**TS:** My first real exposure to Timor was when I traveled there in April 1993 with Amos Wako, the Secretary-General's Personal Envoy for the follow up of the [12 November 1991] Santa Cruz massacre in Dili. He had visited in 1992, submitted a report, and the recommendations had been given to Indonesia and Portugal confidentially. I had been desk officer for Timor for about a year by then. I accompanied him (along with colleagues from the then Centre for Human Rights) for this follow-up and became involved in advancing the issue of accountability for the Santa Cruz massacre. The visit also came a few months after the capture of resistance leader Xanana Gusmão. There was concern about his security and safety, and my role was to make sure Wako got direct access to Xanana. Within weeks I returned to Timor to observe the conclusion of Xanana's trial and sentencing in Dili.

**JDG: Gusmão was a jailed rebel leader whom the Indonesians regarded as being a "terrorist". Wasn't this a highly unusual role for the UN?**

**TS:** There was a formal mandate from the UN General Assembly via a **1982 resolution** requesting the Secretary-General to "initiate consultations with all parties directly concerned" in order to find a lasting solution to the question of East Timor. So talks had been ongoing for over a decade. But up to that point the Timorese had been totally excluded from the discussions. The Portuguese had proposed, when talks resumed in 1992 after the Santa Cruz massacre, that the Timorese should be included. The Indonesians rejected this completely because, from their point of view, **the Timorese had already decided to be part of their country.** At our suggestion, the Secretary-General managed to get a concession from Indonesia that he would be free to consult with Timorese from the pro-integration and pro-independence camps. This was a way of bringing their views to the table, and it provided an opening for us to insist on speaking with all Timorese. Vendrell and I visited Indonesia and Timor twice in 1994 and each time we insisted on seeing Xanana in prison. Indonesia reluctantly allowed us, and this set a pattern. After that, meeting him became part of the routine. My approach was less formalistic. I maintained regular communication with the independence leaders in exile – Jose Ramos-Horta, Mari Alkatiri and others and cultivated a productive relationship with pro-integration figures like Lopes da Cruz, Abilio Araujo and others. Inside Timor, Bishops Belo and Nascimento were highly respected figures who spoke authoritatively for the Timorese. I maintained excellent relations with Portuguese and Indonesian diplomats and even some degree of contact with some Indonesian military and security figures. You had to get your hands dirty in the engagement process. This intensified significantly after 1998 following Suharto's fall. The year before, the Secretary-General had appointed a Personal Representative for East Timor, Jamsheed Marker, with a view to accelerating the good offices. Marker began to visit more frequently and to meet Xanana and other leaders. The new opening enabled me to meet with hitherto inaccessible youth and community leaders in Timor, many of whom were part of the clandestine resistance and some are today taking over the leadership of the country, including current Prime Minister Rui Araujo. On the diplomatic front, we at DPA were deeply involved in exploring alternative ideas and proposals around autonomy, independence, transition, and in drafting the 5 May 1999 agreements on East Timor and the implementation of the historic referendum on 30 August 1999.

**JDG: And how was Nepal different?**

**TS:** This was an ongoing conflict since 1996, and UN engagement was initiated in 2003 despite the reluctance of the then government of Nepal and India. Ceasefires had been declared and talks started, but they broke down for the second time in 2003, and the Maoist negotiating team in Kathmandu had gone back underground. There was a serious deficit of trust and weak process management. I began talking to all sides and carried a few messages, particularly between the Maoists and the government. After I established contact with the Maoists, we were able to explore ideas for finding some common ground with the political parities and (for a while) with the king. The UN did not have a formal mediation role, which sometimes is an advantage because you can talk to all sides but are not directly responsible for ideas that may catch on or sink. We made good use of the "convening power" and credibility of the UN, its impartiality. The UN also offered various tools and means for implementing a peace agreement, should one be concluded - from monitoring and verification to electoral assistance and the deployment of full-fledged peace operation. At the same time, there was also concern in Nepal that the involvement of the UN could mean the "internationalization" of the conflict or the country being seen as a failed or failing state. As the process advanced it was gratifying to see that, despite the fact that there was no formal UN mediation role, many of the ideas that I explored with the parties over the years formed the basis of

the Comprehensive Peace Agreement of 2006 – the separation of forces, cantonment of the Maoist army, monitoring of the Nepal Army, UN supported election of a constituent assembly. The UN was then asked to help implement the CPA.

**JDG: So, an agreement triggers a transition for the UN from "good offices" to a "special political mission". Moving along the "spectrum of peace operations", as the HIPPO report calls it, is the transition that simple?**

**TS:** Yes, in fact, that is how it evolved. The issue is how to transition successfully from prevention and peacemaking to either peacekeeping or political mission deployment. But I think we have to see good offices as a holistic endeavor straddling all different phases of a dispute. You can have a good offices role in the prevention phase and/or the peacemaking phase and it will, in all likelihood, continue in the phase implementation and of peace operations. This is because, even if you have an agreement or "comprehensive" framework, details are often negotiated as you move forward.

**JDG: And how did this work in Nepal?**

**TS:** One of the key elements of the 2006 Comprehensive Peace Agreement was to negotiate arrangements for containment of the Maoist army and the restriction of the Nepal Army. The modalities for this and the monitoring of the weapons had to be worked out. Where were the weapons to be kept? What kind of UN monitoring would be put in place? All of these things had to be negotiated after the CPA was signed with UN facilitation led by Ian Martin, who became the SRSG. The implementation of a political agreement, in many ways, is more complex than negotiating it. There could be spoilers who are not satisfied with the agreement and who need to be brought on board by addressing their concerns. Agreements can unravel; you have to constantly prevent, address and resolve problems as you go. Thus, even after a peacekeeping operation or a political mission, peacebuilding is really prevention by another term. You are trying to avert a relapse into conflict.

**JDG: I recall in November 1999 while I was serving in the UN Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), you came back to Dili from New York some months after the referendum to help the mission set up the first quasi-legislative body, the National Consultative Council (NCC). It was almost as if you returned to play a good offices role between the UN and the Timorese?**

**TS:** East Timor is an example of mostly how not to do transitions. But it was good that Sergio Vieria de Mello recognizedthat he needed someone who knew the Timorese, their divisions, the dynamics and the pitfalls, to come help him in the initial stage of his role as Administrator. It didn't occur to him immediately. After departing New York, when he was in Portugal meeting exiled Timorese, it became obvious how deeply the UN had been involved through DPA. Before he got to Indonesia, he realized he needed the assistance of someone from DPA. I was specifically asked to come out. I joined him en route to Timor and we arrived together. To his credit, he was very open to listening to people. I briefed him quite thoroughly before our first meeting with Xanana, which helped him to understand the man and how to approach him. Setting up the NCC was a subsequent challenge, largely because the whole territory had been destroyed by the departing pro-Indonesian militias supported by Indonesian security personnel. People were concerned with their survival and their families' survival: they didn't have a roof over their heads. And we were asking them to come to meetings and talk about taxes, which was the last thing on their mind. In the end we managed to form a reasonably credible NCC despite the chaos and the absence of many credible leaders.

**JDG: Why was such a role necessary?**

TS: For continuity. Despite instructions from the 38th floor that both DPA and DPKO needed to work together to make sure that we utilized all the knowledge and assets we had, I don't think we did it sufficiently well. For example, even within some parts of DPA, there was a misperception that by working closely with the CNRT (National Congress for Timorese Resistance), the UN could end up aiding the creation of a one-party state. But the CNRT was an umbrella organization, not a single party, and there was no one else to work with in Timor in 1999. The CNRT had the network on the ground. It was the CNRT that was helping people deal with the aftermath of the violence of August and September 1999. We in DPA had the knowledge, but we could have exploited it much more. UNTAET was treated as a new undertaking in a new country rather than as a continuation of the UN's long involvement. In many ways, East Timor was a "UN child". The UN still has much work to do in this area.

**JDG: In both Nepal and Timor, large Member States had distinct interests. What pressures did you come under while conducting the "good offices" role? How important is it for the Secretary-General to provide you with the protection or space to have sensitive discussions with controversial figures?**

**TS:** This was a key aspect of our work . Member States are often reluctant to fully embrace the role of the Secretary-General's good offices because of their own political sensitivities. Member States' attitudes can vary from support and engaged interest in the issues and role of the UN, to being skeptical, suspicious or downright hostile. In the case of Timor, there were a number of countries that consistently followed events with interest even when things were moving very slowly in the 90s. Besides Indonesia and Portugal, there was always communication with the U.S., Australia, New Zealand, the UK and Japan as well as a number of European countries. Austria provided the venue for all five rounds of Intra-East Timorese Dialogue that we facilitated between 1994 and 1998. The Lusophone countries in Africa provided support to the resistance movement in exile. Most Asian countries didn't want to touch the subject of East Timor, seeing the conflict as an internal affair of Indonesia. After the signing of the **5 May Agreements** in 1999, a small group of countries formed what came to be known as the Core Group: Australia, Japan, New Zealand, the UK, and the U.S. The Core Group provided vital political support to the SG's good offices. Materially, they contributed tens of millions of dollars to the trust fund that was set up to help stand up the **UN Mission in East Timor (UNAMET)** in 1999 and made in-kind contributions that allowed for the mission's rapid establishment. The Field Logistics and Administrative Division [FLAD] had said, "We can't set up a mission in three months." The general political support the Secretary-General enjoyed from member states in regard to East Timor, especially after 1998 made it possible for us in DPA to operate with a considerable degree of authority

**JDG: Nepal is a landlocked country wedged between the two giants of China and India. What geo-politics were at play there?**

**TS:** India had great reservations about UN involvement in Nepal, particularly at the beginning. There was a lot of push back. There was pressure on the Nepalese to say no to the UN, and much of our work really consisted of convincing India that UN involvement was not a threat to their interests. We understood the special relationship between the two countries, and the open border they shared. There was also a historical relationship between the Naxalites in India and the Maoists in Nepal. Not surprisingly, India didn't want to see the Maoists succeed in Nepal. We understood all of these things. We did not want to undermine India's interests, but clearly there was a need for a third party to help build confidence and offer ideas on how to resolve this conflict that had

claimed close to 15,000 lives. All my visits to Nepal included a stop in Delhi to brief the Indians on what we were doing, and foster open communication. Once the CPA was signed, India wanted UNMIN to start working immediately. It provided us with significant logistical support to expedite the mission's deployment. But India remained wary of a "political" role for the mission. Indeed, the major weakness in UNMIN's mandate was the conspicuous absence in the resolution establishing it of the reference to UNMIN's good offices role that had been proposed by the Secretary-General's in his report to the Security Council.

**JDG: How important is it to talk to all parties, even those committed to using violence?**

**TS:** It is critical. In 1992 the Secretary-General got an important concession from the Indonesians allowing him to speak to Timorese of all sides, including Xanana. Prior to this, even meeting people from the external wing of the East Timorese resistance was done almost surreptitiously. They had difficulty getting access into the UN building. To the UN's credit, we pushed back against Indonesian objections to such meetings. Even at the senior level, we said, "You can't expect us to be of any help if we can't speak to everyone involved. You may treat them as terrorists but they are integral. If you want peace, you are going to have to bring those people on board. If you don't talk to them, we have to talk to them." In Nepal, we managed to gain acceptance and trust because we consulted as widely as possible and avoided what could sometimes become tempting "quick fix" solutions. These would have unraveled easily because of the exclusion or objection of one of the three antagonistic sides at the time (the political parties, the Palace and the Maoists). We invested considerable time and energy in trying to persuade King Gyanendra to look for compromises. I personally spent over two hours with him in early 2005 after delivering a letter from Secretary-General Kofi Annan. He staged his coup shortly after that with the help of the army. In May, at a one-on-one meeting in Jakarta, the Secretary-General tried to persuade him to change course, and to do so urgently - to no avail. It became clear that there would be a showdown. Indeed, the showdown came in 2006 and led to the King's removal from power and the subsequent abolition of the monarchy, a centuries-old institution.

**JDG: It is hard thing to imagine these days the UN having a mandate to talk to "terrorists"?**

**TS:** Violent extremism has taken unprecedented forms with the emergence of forces that use inhuman methods of terror and destruction. These are not forces interested in or amenable to dialogue and political solutions. However, not every group that uses violence to advance its political cause falls in that category. It is very important for any third party trying to help resolve a conflict to be prepared to engage and work with insurgents of different varieties. It is often surprising to discover how ready they may be for dialogue and compromise. It may be that they don't want to show any weakening of their resolve or simply that they are unsure as to how to go about opening channels. State security forces are often equally or more responsible for atrocities. The UN has to deal with all sorts of unsavory characters, while sticking to its principles in its engagement, and above all, in the content of agreements it brokers, particularly on accountability for grave violations. There are clear guidelines for UN mediators in this regard. It is not an easy task because if you are too much of a purist about these things you will be completely hamstrung. On the other hand, you cannot, for expediency, become a party to a bad agreement that leads to amnesty for grave crimes. When I was communicating with the Maoists of Nepal, some external actors asked me, "How can the UN talk to an outlawed group?". Speaking to them didn't mean we were endorsing what they were doing or condoning their actions. In fact, raising the UN's concerns about these issues is one of the key messages one has to deliver when engaging with insurgencies, as indeed with state actors about the unlawful behavior of their security forces. The UN has to uphold its impartiality and its independence of action regarding who it engages.

**JDG: Looking back at your career in peacemaking, what were the skills and experiences that were most useful and where did you acquire them?**

**TS:** I was fortunate to have been given an important dossier like East Timor as a junior officer. Having Francesc Vendrell as director at the DPA Asia Pacific Division from 1992 made a big difference. He encouraged initiative and a degree of risk-taking. The Under Secretary-General and Assistant Secretary-General became receptive and once your work is recognized you get support and you are listened to. Patience is something you cannot have enough of when you are dealing with an issue that remains stuck year after year – until one day the possibilities suddenly open. I see today quite a few talented and dedicated political officers in the UN. The problem in the UN is that there isn't really a career development structure for staff. There isn't a system whereby talented staff are recognized and given direction and a path in their development. This deprives the Organization the optimal use of its capacities. This needs to change.

**JDG: What could be done to make DPA more field focused and people centered?**

**TS:** The organization as a whole has to be really serious about investing in prevention and peacemaking. Everyone says prevention is better than cure. The Security Council and General Assembly have, time and again, said that the Secretary-General needs to be given adequate resources for this, but nothing has been done to improve the situation significantly. DPA is hugely dependent on extra-budgetary funding to do its core function, which shouldn't be the case. This needs to be addressed and a group of member states need to champion prevention as their issue and push for change.

Second, the Secretariat itself has to show greater commitment to this. It has to engage member states in a sustained manner and ask that they follow their commitment to prevention with action, both in terms of political support/action and resource allocation.

Third, DPA needs to be more operational than it is today. It has already moved away considerably from a desk-oriented approach to prevention and peacemaking. It needs to continue to move in that direction. People have to go out and take risks. To come to your point, you cannot do this work from your desk and by telephone from New York. DPA's big challenge is that it is a headquarters-based department trying to deal with problems around the world without being there. The next best thing to having a presence everywhere (which is neither possible nor desirable) is having regional offices. The three existing regional offices have proved their value. The Peace and Development Advisors attached to UNDP have been a huge asset. The liaison arrangements we left in Nepal after the closure of the mission, which is a little bit of an informal arrangement, has been a huge asset not only in terms of monitoring and reporting and analysis, but in keeping the communication channels open.

*Tamrat Samuel is a non-resident fellow at the Center on International Cooperation at NYU.*

*Jim Della-Giacoma is the Deputy Director of theCenter on International Cooperation at NYU. | **Twitter: @jimdella***

# ANNEXES

**THE BELOW TITLES ARE FULLY HYPERLINKED TO THE GLOBAL PEACE OPERATIONS WEBSITE.**

## MONTHLY NEWSLETTERS

## MAPS

## INFOGRAPHICS & MEDIA

## GPOR LIBRARY

## ANNUAL REVIEW OF GLOBAL PEACE OPERATIONS ARCHIVE

## RELATED PUBLICATIONS

*Global*

Peace Operations

*Review*

Center on International Cooperation
726 Broadway, Suite 543
New York, NY 10003
cic.nyu.edu

@PeaceOpsCIC

peaceoperationsreview.org

Cover Photo: ©ALEXANDRA NOVOSELOFF